

ADDRESS

TO THE

CHURCHES OF JESUS CHRIST,

BY THE

EVANGELICAL UNION ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK,

AUXILIARY TO THE AM. A. S. SOCIETY.

WITH THE

CONSTITUTION, NAMES OF OFFICERS, BOARD OF MANAGERS,
AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

APRIL, 1839.

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ADDRESS

TO THE

EVANGELICAL CHURCHES OF THE UNITED STATES, AND TO THE MEMBERS
OF SUCH CHURCHES IN NEW YORK CITY ESPECIALLY—GREETING :

DEAR BRETHREN—

THE Constitution subjoined to this address shows what we have done, and what is the object of our association. Duty alone prompts us to the high and holy task of addressing you as we now do—a task more befitting clearer heads and purer hearts than ours—a task which demands the prudence of experience and the ardor of love. But professing faith in the same Divine Master, and feeling the pressure of high obligation to advance his cause and the principles of his gospel, we have presumed to plead with you in behalf of bleeding humanity.

With two and a half million of our countrymen, life, and the exercise of all the faculties of our nature, are subject to the will, and are required to be subservient to the pleasure and interest of others, others who seem to suppose they may thus annul the laws of nature, and escape the penalty of such deeds. This is the condition to which every slave is reduced, and a large proportion of those who thus lord it over the image of God are professors of the religion of Jesus. That slaveholding is a violation of all natural right, as well as of the precepts and spirit of Christianity,—that it takes away the moral agency of its victims, destroys the social relations established by God, and openly contemns his laws, and is the greatest possible wrong which can be inflicted on a human being, no man would deny, if himself were about to be subjected thereunto. And does not our holy religion require us to place ourselves in such a position in the contemplation of the wrongs of our suffering countrymen? Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them, is the divine injunction,—and what Christian will refuse to obey it?

Christian brethren, in addressing you at this time, we shall not attempt to engage your attention, and enlist your energies, in the behalf of our oppressed countrymen, by any new or novel presentation of their condition, or by a resort to any enthusiastic efforts to prove the system which crushes them, sinful under all possible circumstances; much less do we expect to secure your co-operation against the giant sin of slaveholding by any thing approaching to exaggeration touching the cruelty of masters; but we shall confidently look for your immediate and untiring efforts to purify the church from this deep iniquity, in accordance with the success which may attend our humble but faithful efforts to in-

duce you to “*stand in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein that you may find rest to your souls.*” In presenting the testimony of the church, we might be spared the unpleasantness of referring thereto as borne by different branches thereof, instead of offering the testimony of each holy witness that may testify as a voice of the whole church ; but the unity of sentiment among holy men of all denominations, as to the sin of slaveholding removes that embarrassment. We shall not, however, on the one hand, descend so far into particulars as to present the testimony of each distinct denomination of Christians, nor, on the other, be so general as to give special notice to none of them, but shall deem it sufficient to present some of the testimony, which has been borne against slaveholding by the four leading denominations of Christians, in the order of their antiquity.

The Protestant Episcopal Church in this country has said less on the subject of slavery than either of the other leading denominations. A clergyman of North Carolina has published a sermon in justification of the reduction of human beings to a state of personal chattelship, which has met the approval of Bishop Ives. But that such doctrine is in accordance with the principles of the church will scarcely be contended. The excellent LITANY, which it is the duty of every clergyman to repeat in the public services of Wednesdays and Fridays, as well as on Sabbath forenoons, is in direct opposition to such degrading doctrine. How would it sound for the clergyman, in the general supplication, to say, “show thy pity upon all personal chattels and defend such of them as are desolate and oppressed,” and then for the whole congregation to respond—

“We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord?” Who would be guilty of such mockery ? And yet, what less than that is it for clergymen of the church, to preach in justification of slavery, and then devoutly pray for the desolate and oppressed. That Church must be right in principle on the subject of human rights, which makes it obligatory on its clergy and members to pray that God would “pity all prisoners and captives, and defend and provide for the fatherless children and widows, and all who are desolate and oppressed,”—however much some portion thereof may preach and practice slavery. The reluctance of the P. E. Church in this country to engage in active and efficient measures for the relief of our oppressed countrymen, may be attributed to other reasons, beside an anxiety to escape the charge of novelty and fanaticism, but can not be the result of a conviction, that such efforts would militate against the genuine and ancient doctrine of the Church. This will be shown by extracts from the writings of men whom the Church has delighted to honor, both on account of their piety and talents. And let it here be premised, that whatever arguments bear against the slave-trade, bear equally, if not more forcibly, against domestic slavery ; the one is a traffic in men in heathen lands, the other a traffic in men in Christian lands.

In England there is a society for the Propagation of the Gospel. It is an ancient institution. Its annual sermon has usually been preached by the most eminent of the clergy. That of the year 1711, was preached by Bishop Fleetwood, a quotation from which will first be offered in testimony. He adverts to

planters who do not provide their slaves with Christian instruction—a class of planters constituting a majority of American slaveholders. Indeed, the laws of several slaveholding states positively forbid the Christian instruction of slaves, by prohibiting them from learning to read. “What,” says Bishop Fleetwood, “can these people think of Christ? That He who came from heaven, to purchase to himself a church with his own precious blood, should sit contented and behold with unconcern those who profess themselves his servants, excluding from its gates those who would gladly enter if they might, and exercising no less cruelty to their souls than to their bodies! One may ask, indeed, with indignation, what such people think of Christ? It would be as hard for them to tell this, as to give an account of what they think of those unhappy creatures whom they use thus cruelly. They see them equally the workmanship of God with themselves; endued with the same faculties and intellectual powers; bodies of the same flesh and blood; and souls as certainly immortal. These people were bought with the same price; purchased with the same blood of Christ, their common Savior and Redeemer; and in order to all this, they were to have the means of salvation put into their hands; they were to be instructed in the faith of Christ.” Let any of these cruel masters tell us, what part of all these blessings were *not intended* for their unhappy slaves by God, purchased for them by the blood of Christ; and which they are not equally capable of enjoying with themselves? What account, then, will those masters give of *themselves*, who will not permit their slaves to be instructed, and become the servants of their Heavenly Master; who bring them, as it were, in sight of the waters of life, and then withhold them from receiving any benefit from them.” “These people ought to think what answer they will make to Christ, when He shall ask them, why they would not help to increase his kingdom, and to make their fellow creatures as happy as they hoped themselves to be by being *called by his name*? Such questions will be asked them, with severity enough, and will require a better answer than, I fear, the subtlest Christian in the world can make: and, therefore, sure, it were better to prevent them by removing the occasion.”

The pure religion, genuine humanity, and just regard for human rights, embodied in the above remarks of Bishop Fleetwood, do honor to his head and heart, and are worthy the imitation of all the American clergy. And are such doctrines to be sacrificed by the Protestant clergy at the shrine of popularity, or to escape the charge of enthusiasm? What can such *ministers* think of Christ? Are the purchase of the Savior’s blood so valueless, that his ministers shall refuse to urge their Christian instruction for fear of being denounced by ungodly men as fanatical? How withering must be Christ’s rebuke to such in the great day?

Said Dean Stanhope to the Society, in 1714, “Slaves, it is true they are, wild and untaught, exposed to common sale, and wrought like beasts of burden. Is it nothing to you that they are created by the same God, formed of the same flesh and blood, descended from the same common ancestor, endued with the same souls, the same capacities for immortal happiness; nay, which should touch us more tenderly than all the rest, that they are also redeemed by the

same precious ransom? Birth and fortune, climate and complexion, barbarism and servitude, are only circumstantial differences, such as ought not to be made too great reckoning, when the essential parts continue the same. A good man will find but too much ground for grief and pity, but none at all for neglect, contempt or inhuman treatment, even in the meanest and most abject of his own species."

This is the foundation doctrine of modern abolitionists—this is the doctrine which abolished slavery in Europe, arrested the African slave-trade, and pronounced it piracy,—this is the doctrine which gives energy to the struggle now maintained against domestic slavery, and promises the friends of liberty here a triumph more complete and glorious. And will not the clergy of the church, follow the example of their own Stanhope, to accelerate a work so glorious? Will not the membership thereof share in such imperishable honor?

Archbishop Secker, in his sermon before the Society, in 1740, remarked,—“The next objects of the Society’s concern were the poor Negroes. Their servitude is most laborious, their punishments most severe. And thus many thousands of them spend their whole days, one generation after another, undergoing, with reluctant minds, continual toil in this world, and comforted with no hopes of reward in a better. For it is not to be expected that masters, too commonly negligent of Christianity themselves, will take much pains to teach it to their slaves, whom even the better part of them are in a great measure habituated to consider, as they do their cattle, merely with a view to the profit arising from them. Not a few have openly opposed their instruction, from an imagination that baptism would entitle them to freedom. Others, by obliging them to work on Sundays to provide themselves necessaries, leave them neither time to learn religion in, nor any prospect of being able to subsist, if once the duty of resting on that day becomes a part of their belief. And some, it may be feared, have been averse to their becoming Christians, because, after that, no pretence will remain for not treating them like men.”

The idea, that slaves in the United States are better supplied with religious instruction than the slaves to whom Archbishop Secker above alluded, is urged, to obviate the force of such remarks—but that the idea is as false as it is common is evident from Southern testimony. In a sermon preached by the Rev. Charles C. Jones, in 1831, before two associations of planters in Liberty and McIntosh counties, Georgia, he observes—“Generally speaking they (the slaves) appear to us to be without God and without hope in the world, A NATION OF HEATHEN IN OUR VERY MIDST. We can not cry out against the Papists for withholding the Scriptures from the common people, and keeping them in ignorance of the way of life; for we withhold the Bible from our servants, and keep them in ignorance of it, while we *will* not use the means to have it read and explained to them. The cry of our perishing servants comes up to us from the sultry plains as they bend at their toil—it comes up to us from their humble cottages when they return at evening to rest their weary limbs—it comes up to us from the midst of their ignorance, and superstition, and adultery and lewdness. We have manifested no emotions of horror at abandoning the souls of our servants to the adversary, the roaring lion that walketh about

seeking whom he may devour." Other testimony showing that "the slaves of the South are, generally speaking, *destitute of the Gospel, and ever will be under the present state of things,*" might be adduced, but we proceed with our main design.

In 1766, Bishop Warburton addressed the Society, and remarked, "From the *free savages*, I now come to the *savages in bonds*. By these I mean the vast multitudes yearly sacrificed by the colonists (slaveholders) to their great idol, the god of gain. But what then? say these sincere worshippers of mammon, they are our own property, which we offer up. Gracious God! to talk (as in herds of cattle) of property in rational creatures! creatures endowed with all our faculties, possessing all our qualities, but that of color; our brethen both by nature and grace, shocks all the feelings of humanity and the dictates of common sense. But, alas! what is there in the infinite abuses of society which does not shock them. Yet nothing is more certain in itself, and apparent to all, that the infamous traffic for slaves directly infringes both divine and human law. NATURE created man free; and GRACE invites him to assert his freedom."

Who of the learned clergy will repeat the above quotation in their pulpits once a year for suffering humanity? Surely Warburton was not a fanatic! Or who of them will publicly join the celebrated Bishop Newton in the following reprobation of the *system* of slavery, pronounced in 1769. "Whatever necessity may be pleaded for it, it is greatly to be lamented, that there is any such thing as slavery any where. As Moses said, *would* God that all the Lord's people were prophets, so I would say, would God that all mankind were free, that those who are bound were free, and that those who are free, may so use their liberty as not to abuse it unto licentiousness."

Bishop Porteus, in 1783, after eloquently describing the "broken hearted" condition of the slaves, observes—"It is the clear and decided opinion of every man who has considered the subject thoroughly, and has had opportunities of observing and studying, for a long course of years, the temper, the disposition, the manners, the capacities, the treatment and the condition of our negro slaves, that in their present state of debasement and degradation, sunk as they are below the level of the human species; treated merely as animals doomed to labor; cut off almost entirely from the protection of the State, and the advantages of social life, with scarcely any substantial comforts and indulgences to cheer their spirits, to excite their ambition, to encourage their hopes, they are hardly capable of receiving any deep and lasting impressions of religion. If ever we hope to make any considerable progress in our benevolent purpose of communicating to our negroes the benefits and the blessings of religion, we must first give them some of the benefits and the blessings of society and of civil government."

Such are some of the testimonies borne against slavery by most eminent men in the English established Church, to the list of which might be added the revered names of Berkely in 1731, Clagget in 1736, Drummond in 1754, Green in 1768, Lowth in 1771—and in quick succession, Moore, Warner, Bagot and others equally esteemed for prudence, erudition and piety. But we should wrong the cause of

suffering humanity if we wholly omitted to introduce the testimony of the Bishop of Salisbury—Dr. Burgess,—and not less so if we passed by Bishop Horsley without referring the Protestant E. Clergy to his able speeches in Parliament in 1806 and 1813. About half a century since, Dr. Burgess published an able treatise on “The abolition of slavery and the slave trade upon grounds of natural, religious, and political duty.” This is a work of superior merit, and highly worthy a republication in this country, by the humane of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Such a republication would go far to overthrow the system of American Slavery. We regret that our limits confine us to a few brief quotations.

“Such oppression, (the state of slavery), and such traffic, (the slave-trade), must be swept away at one blow. Such horrid offences against God and nature can admit of no medium. Yet some of the more moderate apologists of slavery think that a medium may be adopted. They think that slavery ought not to be abolished, but modified, and meliorated by good laws and regulations. But it is impossible for slavery ‘fieri non turpiter,’ (to be made not infamous.) As to the defence of slavery as a “dispensation of Providence ;” he says, “Many attacks have been made on the authority of Scripture ; but nothing could more effectually subvert its authority than to prove that its injunctions are inconsistent with the common principles of benevolence, and inimical to the general rights of mankind. It would degrade the sanctity of Scripture ; it would reverse all our ideas of God’s paternal attributes, and all arguments for the Divine origin of the Christian religion drawn from its precepts of universal charity and benevolence. That any *custom* so repugnant to the natural rights of mankind as the Slave trade, or *slavery the source and support of the slave trade*, should be thought to be consonant to the principles of natural and revealed religion, is a paradox which it is difficult to reconcile with the reverence due to the records of our holy religion.”

As to the defence of slavery from the golden rule, he exclaims, “Detestable perversion of the most benevolent of all precepts ! Yet there is one obvious view,” he adds, “in which the precept applies to slavery ; for as no person would wish to be reduced to slavery, or to *continue so*, no person whatever should reduce a fellow creature to slavery or keep *him in that condition*. The precept may enjoin the submission of the slave to his master, but it does not enjoin slavery : it neither makes the occasion nor justifies it. Submission is a virtue in a slave ; but the exercise of this virtue neither justifies the making of slaves nor the keeping of them. Offences must come, and injustice will prevail ; but woe to them by whom the offences come ! It should not be forgotten that, if the precept enjoins submission in the slave, it applies *doubly* to the master ; for it enjoins humanity in the treatment of his slaves, AND CONDEMNS HIM FOR KEEPING THEM AT ALL.” We shall make but one quotation more. “Whether all the cruelties imputed to the slave trade, and to slavery, can or can not be substantiated ; whether the cruelties complained of can be mitigated or not ; *the very existence of slavery*, as long as it is permitted, must be a heavy reproach to this country, and a discredit to the age which can tolerate it. Whatever a Machiavelian in politics or commerce may urge to

the contrary, slavery ought to be abolished, because inconsistent with the will of God. It is not a question to be argued merely by statesmen and publicists, but the natural and scriptural illegality of slavery may be judged of on grounds infinitely superior to all commercial considerations (as much superior as the soul is to the body, as the interests of eternity are to the concerns of a day,) by every one that can feel for his fellow creatures, and can be determined by every one that can read the Scriptures. Instead, then, of wishing to restrain the exertions of any order of men or individuals, in this cause of human nature, let us rather of all ranks, professions and persuasions unite—in the name of the *common Father* of mankind—in the name of Him who died to save us all—in the name of Faith, of Charity, and of Liberty, to implore those who have the power, to extirpate a system of cruelty and oppression which has been so long suffered to exist, to the dishonor of human nature, the discredit of a Christian nation, of a generous and enlightened people, and the disgrace of a free constitution.”

We feel, that to such an array of holy and approved witnesses, to such eloquence, we need add no exhortation to induce the membership and clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, to aid us in the purification of the whole Church from the sin of slave-holding.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The extensive revivals in this Church within the past twenty years, would almost induce us to believe no possible moral means had been left untried by its membership and ministers to purify the Zion of God, committed to their care, from that greatest outrage on human nature, and invasion of divine authority, SLAVEHOLDING. But it is not so. Thousands of its communicants at the South are slaveholders, and thousands more of them at the North apologists for the crime. Even its most learned and influential divines are not ashamed to justify slaveholding from the authority of God's word! It becomes necessary, therefore, that even with this Church, we should make effort to “stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance,” that once the cause of our oppressed countrymen was a subject of earnest prayer and self-denying effort among them.

Although cruelty is not slavery, yet as it is an inseparable adjunct of slaveholding, we shall first present the testimony of the Rev. Samuel Hopkins, touching this point.

“The master,” says Mr. Hopkins, “is not a proper judge in this case; you are not a proper judge of your treatment of your slaves; and though you may think you treat them very well, in some instances at least, if not in a constant way, they justly think themselves used very hardly, being really subjected to many hardships, which you would very sensibly feel and resent, if you were in their place; or should see one of your children a slave in Algiers, treated so by his master. There are but few masters of slaves, I believe, who do not use them in a hard, unreasonable manner, in some instances at least; and most do so in a constant way; so that an impartial, attentive bystander will be shocked with it, while the master is wholly insensible of any wrong. They who from us have visited the West Indies, have beheld how servants are

used by their masters there, with a degree of horror, and pronounced them very unreasonable and barbarous ; while the master, and perhaps his other domestics, have thought they were used well, being accustomed to such usage, and never once reflecting that these blacks were in any sense on a level with themselves, or that they have the least right to the treatment white people may reasonably expect of one another ; and being habituated to view these slaves as more beneath themselves, than the very beasts really are. And are we not, most of us, educated in these prejudices, and led to view the slaves among us in such a mean, despicable light, as not to be sensible of the abuses they suffer ; when, if we or our children should receive such treatment from any of our fellow men, it would appear terrible in our sight ? The Turks are by education and custom, taught to view the Christian slaves among them so much beneath themselves, and in such an odious light, that while they are treating our brethren and children, (we being judges) in the most unreasonable and cruel manner, they have not one thought that they injure them in the least degree.

“Are you sure your slaves have a sufficiency of good food, in season ; and that they never want for comfortable clothing and bedding ? Do you take great care to deal as well by them in these things, as you could wish others would treat your own children, were they slaves in a strange land ? If your servants complain, are you ready to attend to them ? Or do you in such cases frown upon them, or do something worse, so as to discourage their ever applying to you, whatever they may suffer, having learned that this would only be making bad worse ? Do you never fly into a passion, and deal with them in great anger, deciding matters respecting them, and threatening them, and giving sentence concerning them, from which they have no appeal, and perhaps proceed to correct them, when to a calm bystander you appear more fit to be confined in a bedlam, than to have the sovereign, uncontrollable dominion over your brethren, as the sole lawgiver, judge, and executioner ? Do not even your children domineer over your slaves ? Must they not often be at the beck of an ungoverned, peevish child in the family ; and if they do not run at his or her call, and are not all submission and obedience, must they not expect the frowns of their masters, if not the whip ?

“If none of these things, my good sir, take place in your family, have we not reason to think you an almost singular instance ? How common are things of this kind, or worse, taking place between masters and their slaves ? In how few instances, if in any, are slaves treated as the masters would wish their own children treated, in like circumstances ? How few are fit to be masters ? To have the sovereign dominion over a number of their fellow men, being his property, and wholly at his disposal ; who must abide his sentence and orders, however unreasonable, without any possibility of relief ?

“This leads me to observe, that our distresses are come upon us in such a way, and the occasion of the present war is such, as in the most clear and striking manner to point out the sin of holding our blacks in slavery, and admonish us to reform, and render us shockingly inconsistent with ourselves, and amazingly guilty if we refuse. God has raised up men to attempt to deprive us of liberty ; and the evil we are threatened with is slavery. This, with our

vigorous attempts to avoid it, is the ground of all our distresses, and the general voice is, ‘We will die in the attempt rather than submit to slavery.’ But are we not at the same time making slaves of many thousands of our brethren, who have as good a right to liberty as ourselves, and to whom it is as sweet as it is to us, and the contrary as dreadful ! Are we not holding them in the most abject, miserable state of slavery, without the least compassionate feeling towards them or their posterity ; utterly refusing to take off the oppressive galling yoke ! Oh, the shocking, the intolerable inconsistency ! And this gross, barefaced inconsistency is an open, practical condemnation of holding these our brethren in slavery ; and in these circumstances the crime of persisting in it becomes unspeakably greater and more provoking in God’s sight ; so that all the former unrighteousness and cruelty exercised in this practice, is innocence, compared with the awful guilt that is now contracted. And in allusion to the words of our Savior, it may with great truth and propriety be said, ‘If he had not thus come in his Providence, and spoken unto us, (comparatively speaking,) we had not had sin, in making bond-slaves of our brethren ; but now, we have no cloak for our sin.’

“And if we continue in this evil practice, and refuse to let the oppressed go free, under all this light and admonition, suited to convince and reform us ; and while God is evidently correcting us for it, as well as for other sins, have we any reason to expect deliverance from the calamities we are under ? May we not rather look for slavery and destruction, like that which came upon the obstinate unrefor med Jews ? In this light, I think, it ought to be considered by us ; and viewed thus, it affords a most forcible, formidable argument, not to put off liberating our slaves to a more convenient time ; but to arise, all as one man, and do it with all our might, without delay, since delaying in this case is awfully dangerous, as well as unspeakably criminal.—*Dialogue on African Slavery, 1776, republished 1785, by the N. I. Manumission Society.*

We offer no apology for, but recommend to the prayerful consideration of all Presbyterians, the following long but invaluable testimony of Jonathan Edwards, a name inseparable from Presbyterianism, and remembered by all the friends of learning and religion only to be revered and loved.

In the sermon from which we quote, says Mr. Edwards, “I propose to mention a few reasons against the right of the slave-trade—and then to consider the principal arguments which I have ever heard urged in favor of it. What will be said against the slave-trade will generally be equally applicable to slavery itself ; and if conclusive against the former, will be equally conclusive against the latter.

“As to the slave-trade, I conceive it to be unjust in itself, abominable on account of the cruel manner in which it is conducted, and totally wrong on account of the impolicy of it, or its destructive tendency to the moral and political interests of any country.

“It is unjust in itself. It is unjust in the same sense and for the same reason as it is to steal, to rob, or to murder. It is a principle, the truth of which hath in this country been generally if not universally acknowledged, ever since the commencement of the late war, *that all men are born equally free.* If this be true, the Africans are by nature equally entitled to freedom as we are ; and

therefore, we have no more right to enslave, or to afford aid to enslave them, than they have to do the same to us. They have the same right to their freedom, which they have to their property or to their lives. Therefore to enslave them is as really, and in the same sense wrong, as to steal from them, to rob, or to murder them.

“ There are, indeed, cases in which men may justly be deprived of their liberty, and reduced to slavery ; as there are cases in which they may be justly deprived of their lives. But they can justly be deprived of neither, unless they have, by their own voluntary conduct, forfeited it. Therefore, still, the right of liberty stands on the same basis with the right to life. And that the Africans have done something whereby they have forfeited their liberty, must appear, before we can justly deprive them of it ; as it must appear that they have done something whereby they have forfeited their lives, before we may justly deprive them of these.

“ This trade, and this slavery, are utterly wrong on the ground of their impolicy. In a variety of respects they are exceedingly hurtful to the states which tolerate them.

“ They are hurtful, as they deprave the morals of the people. The incessant and inhuman cruelties practised in the trade and in the subsequent slavery, necessarily tend to harden the human heart against the tender feelings of humanity, in the masters of vessels, in the sailors, in the factors, in the proprietors of slaves, in their children, in the overseers, in the slaves themselves, and in all who habitually see those cruelties. Now the eradication, or even the diminution of compassion, tenderness, and humanity, is certainly a great depravity of heart, and must be followed with corresponding depravity of manners. And measures which lead to such depravity of heart and manners, cannot but be extremely hurtful to the state, and consequently are extremely impolitic.

“ African slavery is exceedingly impolitic, as it discourages industry. Nothing is more essential to the political prosperity of any state, than industry in the citizens. But in proportion as slaves are multiplied, every kind of labor becomes ignominious ; and in fact, in those of the United States, in which slaves are the most numerous, gentlemen and ladies of any fashion disdain to employ themselves in business, which in other states is consistent with the dignity of the first families and first offices. In a country filled with negro slaves, labor belongs to them only, and a white man is despised in proportion as he applies to it. Now how destructive to industry in all of the lowest and middle classes of citizens, such a situation, and the prevalence of such ideas will be, you can easily conceive. The consequence is, that some will nearly starve, others will betake themselves to the most dishonest practices, to obtain the means of living

“ As slavery produces indolence in the white people, so it produces all those vices which are naturally connected with it ; such as intemperance, lewdness, and prodigality. These vices enfeeble both the body and the mind. and unfit men for any vigorous exertions and employments, either external or mental ; and those who are unfit for such exertions, are already a very degenerate race ; degenerate, not only in a moral, but a natural sense. They are contemptible too, and will soon be despised even by their negroes themselves

“Slavery has a most direct tendency to haughtiness also, and a domineering spirit and conduct in the proprietors of the slaves, in their children, and in all who have the control of them. A man who has been bred up in domineering over negroes, can scarcely avoid contracting such a habit of haughtiness and domination, as will express itself in his general treatment of mankind, whether in his private capacity, or in any office, civil or military, with which he may be vested. Despotism in economics naturally leads to despotism in politics, and domestic slavery in a free government is a perfect solecism in human affairs.

“How baneful all these tendencies and effects of slavery must be to the public good, and especially to the public good of such a free country as ours, I need not inform you.

“In the same proportion as industry and labor are discouraged, is population discouraged and prevented. This is another respect in which slavery is exceedingly impolitic. That population is prevented in proportion as industry is discouraged, is, I conceive, so plain that nothing needs to be said to illustrate it. Mankind in general will enter into matrimony as soon as they possess the means of supporting a family. But the great body of any people have no other way of supporting themselves or a family, than by their own labor. Of course, as labor is discouraged, matrimony is discouraged and population is prevented. But the impolicy of whatever produces these effects will be acknowledged by all. The wealth, strength, and glory of a state depend on the number of its virtuous citizens ; and a state without citizens is at least as great an absurdity as a king without subjects.

Having thus considered the injustice and ruinous tendency of the slave-trade, I proceed to attend to the principal arguments urged in favor of it.

The right of slavery is inferred from the instance of Abraham, who had servants born in his house, and bought with his money. But it is by no means certain that these were slaves as our negroes are. If they were, it is unaccountable that he went out at the head of an army of them to fight his enemies. No West India planter would easily be induced to venture himself in such a situation. It is far more probable, that, similar to some of the vassals under the feudal constitution, the servants of Abraham were only in a good measure dependent on him, and protected by him. But if they were to all intents and purposes slaves, Abraham's holding of them will no more prove the right of slavery, than of his going in to Hagar, will prove it right for any man to indulge in criminal intercourse with his domestic.

From the divine permission given to the Israelites to buy servants of the nations round about them, it is argued, that we have a right to buy the Africans and hold them in slavery. See Lev. xxv, 44—47. But if this be at all to the purpose, it is a permission to every nation under heaven to buy slaves of the nations round about them ; to us, to buy of our Indian neighbors ; to them to buy of us ; to the French, to buy of the English, and to the English to buy of the French ; and so through the world. If then this argument be valid, every man has an entire right to engage in this trade, and to buy and sell any other man of another nation, and any other man of another nation has an entire right to buy and sell him. Thus, according to the construction, we have in Lev.

xxv, 43, &c., an institution of an universal slave-trade, by which every man may not only become a merchant, but may rightfully become the merchandise itself of this trade, and may be bought and sold like a beast. Now this consequence will be given up as absurd, and therefore, also the construction of Scripture, from which it follows must be given up. Yet it is presumed, that there is no avoiding that construction or the absurdity flowing from it, but by admitting that the permission to the Israelites to buy slaves has no respect to us, but was in the same manner peculiar to them, as the permission and command to subdue, destroy, and extirpate the whole Canaanitish nation; and, therefore, no more gives countenance to African slavery, than the command to extirpate the Canaanites gives countenance to the extirpation of any nation in these days, by an universal slaughter of men and women, young men and maidens, infants and sucklings.

It is further pleaded, that there were slaves in the times of the apostles; that they did not forbid the holding of those slaves, but gave directions to servants, doubtless referring to the servants of that day, to obey *their masters and count them worthy of all honor*.

To this the answer is, that the apostles teach the general duties of servants who are righteously in the state of servitude, as many are or may be, by hire, by indenture, and by judgment of a civil court. But they do not say whether the servants in general of that day were justly holden in slavery or not. In like manner they lay down the general rules of obedience to civil magistrates, without deciding concerning the characters of the magistrates of the Roman empire in the reign of Nero. And as the Apostle Paul requires masters *to give their servants that which is just and equal*, (Col. iv. 1,) so if any were enslaved unjustly, of course he in his text requires of the masters of such to give them their freedom. Thus the apostles treat the slavery of that day in the same manner that they treat the civil government; and say nothing more in favor of the former, than they say in favor of the latter.

As to the pretence that to prohibit or lay aside this trade, would be hurtful to our commerce, it is sufficient to ask, whether, on the supposition that it were advantageous to the commerce of great Britain to send her ships to these states, and transport us into perpetual slavery in the West Indies, it would be right that she should go into that trade.

It is said, that some men are intended by nature to be slaves. If this means, that the author of nature has given some men a license to enslave others, this is denied, and proof is demanded. If it means that God has made some of capacities inferior to others, and that the last have a right to enslave the first; this argument will prove, that some of the citizens of every country have a right to enslave other citizens of the same country; nay, that some have a right to enslave their own brothers and sisters. But if this argument means, that God in his providence suffers some men to be enslaved, and that this proves, that from the beginning he intended they should be enslaved, and made them with this intention; the answer is, that in like manner he suffers some men to be murdered, and in this sense he intended and made them to be murdered. Yet no man in his senses will hence argue the lawfulness of murder.

We all dread political slavery, or subjection to the arbitrary power of a king, or of any man or men not deriving their authority from the people. Yet such a state is inconceivably preferable to the slavery of the negroes. Suppose that in the late war we had been subdued by Great Britain, we should have been taxed without our consent. But these taxes would have amounted to but a small part of our property. Whereas the negroes are deprived of all their property; no part of their earnings is their own; the whole is their masters. In a conquered state we should have been at liberty to dispose of ourselves and our property, in most cases, as we should choose. We should have been free to live in this or that town or place; in any part of the country, or to remove out of the country; to apply to this or that business; to labor or not; and excepting a sufficiency for taxes, to dispose of the fruit of our labor to our own benefit, or that of our children, or of any other person. But the unhappy negroes in slavery can do none of these things. They must do what they are commanded, and as much as they are commanded, on pain of the lash. They must live wherever they are placed, and must confine themselves to that spot on pain of death.

So that Great Britain in her late attempt to enslave America, committed a very small crime, indeed, in comparison with the crime of those who enslave the Africans.

The arguments which have been urged against the slave-trade, are with little variation applicable to the holding of slaves. He who holds a slave, continues to deprive him of that liberty, which was taken from him on the coast of Africa. And if it were wrong to deprive him of it in the first instance, why not in the second. If this be true, no man has a better right to retain his negro in slavery, than he had to take him from his native African shores. And every man who cannot show, that his negro hath by his voluntary conduct forfeited his liberty, is obligated immediately to manumit him. Undoubtedly we should think so, were we holden in the same slavery in which the negroes are. And our text requires us to do to others as we would they should do to us.

To hold a slave, who has a right to his liberty, is not only a real crime, but a very great one. Does this conclusion seem strange to any of you? You will not deny that liberty is more valuable than property; and that it is a greater sin to deprive a man of his whole liberty during life, than to deprive him of his whole property; or, that *man-stealing* is a greater crime than *robbery*. Nor will you deny, that to hold in slavery a man who was *stolen*, is substantially the same crime as *to steal him*. These principles being undeniable, I leave it to yourselves to draw the plain and necessary consequence. And if your consciences shall, in spite of all opposition, tell you, that while you hold your negroes in slavery, you do wrong, exceedingly wrong; that you do not, as you would that men should do to you; that you commit sin in the sight of God; that you daily violate the plain rights of mankind, and that in a higher degree than if you committed theft or robbery, let me beseech you not to stifle this conviction, but attend to it, and act accordingly, lest you add to your former guilt that of sinning against the light of truth, and of your own consciences.

To convince yourselves, that your information being the same, to hold a negro slave is a greater sin than fornication, theft, or robbery, you need only bring the matter home to yourselves. I am willing to appeal to your own consciences, whether you would not judge it to be a greater sin for a man to hold you and your children during life in such slavery as that of the negroes, than for him to indulge in one instance of licentious conduct, or in one instance to steal or rob. Let conscience speak, and I will submit to its decision.—*The Injustice and Impolicy of the Slave-trade and of the Slavery of the Africans—a Sermon in New Haven, Sept. 15, 1791.*

We shall proceed to place before our Presbyterian brethren, the views formerly entertained by their highest Judicatories, in the hope, that the effort will result in awakening in the heart of the Presbyterian Church, that deep christian sympathy for human woe, which shall induce their Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies, once more to take sides with oppressed and suffering humanity.

Presbyterian Synod of New York and Philadelphia, 1787.

The Synod, taking into consideration the overture concerning slavery, came to the following judgment :

The Synod of New York and Philadelphia do highly approve of the general principles in favor of universal liberty that prevail in America, and the interest which many of the states have taken in promoting the abolition of slavery. They earnestly recommend it to all the members belonging to their communion, to give those persons who are at present held in servitude, such good education as to prepare them for the better enjoyment of freedom. And they moreover recommend that masters, wherever they find servants disposed to make a just improvement of the privilege, would give them a peculium, or grant them sufficient time, and sufficient means of procuring their own liberty at a moderate rate ; thereby they may be brought into society with those habits of industry that may render them useful citizens. And finally, they recommend it to all their people to use the most prudent measures, consistent with the interests and the state of civil society in the countries where they live, to procure eventually the final abolition of slavery in America.

[This “judgment” was also republished as the decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1793.]

The second annunciation of the sentiments of the Presbyterian Church upon the subject of slavery, was made in the year 1794, when the “scripture proofs,” notes, &c., were adopted by the General Assembly. Their doctrine at that period is stated in the *note b, appended to the one hundred and forty-second question of the larger Catechism, in these words :*

“1 Tim. i, 10. The law is made for man-stealers. This crime among the Jews exposed the perpetrators of it to capital punishment; Exodus xxi, 16; and the apostle here classes them with sinners of the first rank. The word he uses, in its original import, comprehends all who are concerned in bringing any of the human race into slavery, or in retaining them in it. *Hominum fures, qui servos vel liberos abducunt, retinent, vendunt, vel emunt. Steal-*

ers of men are all those who bring off slaves or freemen, and keep, sell, or buy them. To steal a freeman, says Grotius, is the highest kind of theft. In other instances, we only steal human property, but when we steal or retain men in slavery, we seize those who, in common with ourselves, are constituted by the original grant, lords of the earth. Genesis i, 28. Vide Poli synopsin in loc."

Advice given by the Assembly, in relation to Slavery, in 1815.

"The committee to which was committed the report of the committee to which the petition of some elders, who entertain conscientious scruples on the subject of holding slaves, together with that of the Synod of Ohio, concerning the buying and selling of slaves, had been referred, reported; and their report being read and amended, was adopted, and is as follows:—

"The General Assembly have repeatedly declared their cordial approbation of those principles of civil liberty which appear to be recognised by the Federal and State governments, in these United States. They have expressed their regret that the slavery of the Africans and of their descendants still continues in so many places, and even among those within the pale of the Church; and have urged the Presbyteries under their care, to adopt such measures as will secure at least to the rising generation of slaves, within the bounds of the Church, a religious education; that they may be prepared for the exercise and enjoyment of liberty, when God, in his providence, may open a door for their emancipation. The committee refer said petitioners to the printed extracts of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, for the year 1787, on this subject, republished by the Assembly in 1793; and also to the extracts of the minutes of the Assembly for 1795; which last are in the following words:—

" 'A serious and conscientious person, a member of a Presbyterian congregation, who views the slavery of the negroes as a moral evil, highly offensive to God, and injurious to the interests of the gospel, lives under the ministry of a person, or among a society of people, who concur with him in sentiment on the subject upon general principles; yet, for particular reasons, hold slaves, and tolerate the practice in others,—Ought the former of these persons, under the impressions and circumstances above described, to hold Christian communion with the latter?'

"Whereupon, after due deliberation, it was *Resolved*, that as the same difference of opinion with respect to slavery takes place in sundry other parts of the Presbyterian Church, notwithstanding which, they live in charity and peace, according to the doctrine and practice of the apostles; it is hereby recommended to all conscientious persons, and especially to those whom it immediately respects, to do the same. At the same time, the General Assembly assure all the Churches under their care, that they view with the deepest concern any vestiges of slavery which may exist in our country, and refer the churches to the records of the General Assembly, published at different times; but especially to an overture of the late Synod of New York and Philadelphia, published in 1787, and republished among the extracts from the minutes of the

General Assembly of 1793, on that head, with which they trust every conscientious person will be fully satisfied.

“This is deemed a sufficient answer to the first petition; and with regard to the second, the Assembly observe, that although in some sections of our country, under certain circumstances, the transfer of slaves may be unavoidable, yet they consider the buying and selling of slaves by way of traffic, and all undue severity in the management of them, as inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. And they recommend it to the Presbyteries and Sessions under their care, to make use of all prudent measures to prevent such shameful and unrighteous conduct.”—*Digest*, page 339.

“A full expression of the Assembly's views of Slavery in 1818.

“The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, having taken into consideration the subject of slavery, think proper to make known their sentiments upon it.

“We consider the voluntary enslaving for one part of the human race by another, as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature; as utterly inconsistent with the law of God which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves; and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ, which enjoin that ‘all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.’ Slavery creates a paradox in the moral system—it exhibits rational, accountable, and immortal beings in such circumstances as scarcely to leave them the power of moral action. It exhibits them as dependent on the will of others, whether they shall receive religious instruction; whether they shall know and worship the true God; whether they enjoy the ordinances of the gospel; whether they shall perform the duties and cherish the endearments of husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbors and friends; whether they shall preserve their chastity and purity, or regard the dictates of justice and humanity. Such are some of the consequences of slavery; *consequences not imaginary*, but which connect themselves with its very existence. The evils to which the slave is *always* exposed, often take place in their *very worst degree and form*; and where all of them do not take place, still the slave is deprived of his natural rights, degraded as a human being, and exposed to the danger of passing into the hands of a master who may inflict upon him all the hardships and injuries which inhumanity and avarice may suggest.

“From this view of the consequences resulting from the practice into which christian people have most inconsistently fallen, of enslaving a portion of their brethren of mankind, it is manifestly the duty of all Christians, when the inconsistency of slavery with the dictates of humanity and religion has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors, as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout the world. We earnestly exhort them to continue and to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery.—We exhort them to suffer no

greater delay to take place in this most interesting concern than a regard to the public welfare truly and indispensably demands.

“As our country has inflicted a most grievous injury on the unhappy Africans by bringing them into slavery, our country ought to be governed in this matter by no other consideration than an *honest and impartial regard to the happiness of the injured party*, uninfluenced by the expense or inconvenience which such a regard may involve. We, therefore, warn all who belong to our denomination of Christians, against unduly extending this plea of necessity; against making it a cover for the love and practice of slavery, or a pretence for not using efforts that are lawful and practicable to extinguish the evil.

“Having thus expressed our views of slavery and of the duty indispensably incumbent on all Christians to labor for its complete extinction, we proceed to recommend, with all the earnestness and solemnity which this momentous subject demands, a particular attention to the following points.

“We recommend to all the members of our religious denomination, to facilitate and encourage the instruction of their slaves in the principles and duties of the Christian religion, by granting them liberty to attend on the preaching of the gospel; by favoring the instruction of them in Sabbath schools, and by giving them all other proper advantages for acquiring the knowledge of their duty both to God and man. It is incumbent on all Christians to communicate religious instruction to those who are under their authority, and the doing of this in the case before us, so far from operating, as some have apprehended that it might, as an excitement to insubordination, would operate as the most powerful means for the prevention of those evils.”

The Assembly here subjoin a note, which proves that the quietude of the Island of Antigua, when the slaves of the neighboring West India islands had been in commotion, was owing to the religious instruction of the Moravian Missionaries. To which may be added, the examples of Demerara and Jamaica since. This document of the Assembly is thus closed: “We enjoin it on all Church Sessions and Presbyteries to discountenance, and as far as possible to prevent all cruelty, of whatever kind, in the treatment of slaves; especially the cruelty of separating husband and wife, parents and children; and that which consists in selling slaves to those who will either themselves deprive those unhappy people of the blessings of the gospel, or who will transport them to places where the gospel is not proclaimed, or where it is forbidden to slaves to attend upon its institutions. The manifest violation or disregard of this injunction, ought to be considered as just ground for the discipline and censures of the church. And if it shall ever happen that a Christian professor in our communion shall sell a slave, who is also in communion with our church, contrary to his or her will and inclination, it ought immediately to claim the particular attention of the proper church judicature; and unless there be such peculiar circumstances attending the case as can but seldom happen, it ought to be followed without delay, by a suspension of the offender from all the privileges of the church, till he repent and make all the reparation in his power to the injured party.”—*Digest of the General Assembly, page 341.*

We need scarcely here say, that entirely opposite views of slaveholding have been entertained and expressed, of late years, by Presbyterians, and Presbyterian Judicatories, and by members and ecclesiastical bodies of other Christian denominations,—much less need we here repeat those horrid expressions, amounting well nigh to blasphemy; but for the encouragement of all who love our blessed Lord Jesus, and wait for the appearance of his coming, we shall, at the close of the ancient testimony in each of the Churches, add some cheering testimony, to urge us all forward in our inquiry after the old paths—the good way of holy freedom.

A convention held in Cincinnati in July, 1838, in which were members from twelve Presbyteries, expressed itself on the subject of slavery thus—

“Whereas there is reason to believe that the influence of slavery was in a high degree efficacious in leading to the revolutionary proceedings of the Assembly of 1837, this convention feels called on in the providence of God to make an explicit avowal of their views on this subject.”

And we do hereby re-affirm the following language of the General Assembly of 1818: after repeating part of the language of the General Assembly of 1818, the convention proceed.

“In this language this convention do most heartily concur, and feel constrained to say that, if ever the time should come when our church would rescind this language, and do or say any thing that would imply that slavery is not a palpable violation of the law of God, it would be most distressing evidence of a departure from the principles of God’s word and a flagrant dereliction of duty. If these things are so, then it follows that the church ought to take speedy and decisive measures to purify itself from this long continued enormous evil.”

Resolutions in accordance with the foregoing language were unanimously adopted, with but a single dissenting voice.

The “new school” Synod of Indiana, subsequently incorporated the very language of the above convention in their resolutions against slavery.

After a division of the Synod of Cincinnati, the first act, after organization by both parties were to express their views on the subject of slavery.

The Synod of the “old school” thus decidedly expressed itself.

“WHEREAS, the General Assembly of 1818 expressed its strong opposition to slavery, and declared it to be “manifestly the duty of all Christians who enjoy the light of the present day, when the inconsistency of slavery, both with the dictates of humanity and religion, has been demonstrated, and is generally seen and acknowledged, to use their honest, earnest, and unwearied endeavors to correct the errors of former times, and as speedily as possible to efface this blot on our holy religion, and to obtain the complete abolition of slavery throughout Christendom, and if possible, throughout the world”—therefore.

“Resolved, That the next General Assembly be respectfully entreated to institute an inquiry into this matter in all our Presbyteries, in order to ascertain whether this duty has been neglected; and if so, to take such order on the subject as will tend to hasten the emancipation of the oppressed.”

The “new school” synod declared as follows—

“ WHEREAS, the Presbyterian Church has, in times past, tolerated the sin of slavery, and thereby incurred the guilt of oppression, and the displeasure of Heaven :

“ *Resolved*, That we, as a Synod, now confess that sin before God, and implore his forgiveness.”

This, after some discussion, having passed unanimously, the Synod spent some time in devotional exercises.

Synod took a recess till half past 2 o'clock.

After the recess, synod passed the following resolutions unanimously :

“ 1. *Resolved*, That we will not, knowingly, be partakers in the sin of slavery ; but that, in reliance on God, we will use the means which our judgment and conscience approve for its entire eradication.

“ 2. *Resolved*, That we recommend to our congregations to give attention to this subject, and to remember them that are in bonds as bound with them.”

The Synods of Utica, Genesee, and Geneva have more than once taken high ground on this deeply interesting subject.

We shall only add the testimony of the synods of Illinois in September last, and of Ohio, in Sept. 1837—which is thus recorded.

“ WHEREAS a resolution was adopted by this synod at its last meeting, declaring it to be “ the duty of all Christians in this country, in all places, and at all proper times, to bear testimony, both public and private, against the sin of slavery ; ” and whereas it is often alleged that the subject of slavery is a political subject, and that therefore it is improper for the ministers of the gospel to preach upon, it ; therefore,—

“ *Resolved*, That it is the duty of all ministers who preach to a people making their own laws, to lift up their voice against all legislation which is a direct invasion of the laws and authority of God.

“ *Resolved*, That the system of American slavery is such an invasion and violation of the laws of God, and is, therefore, a proper subject for warning and rebuke.

“ And whereas the example of the apostle is often alluded to, as not so pointedly condemning the sin of slavery as is by many deemed the duty of ministers in this age ;

“ *Resolved*, That inasmuch as the power of legislation was not in the hands of primitive Christians, but they were under the persecuting influence of a tyrannical pagan civil power, utterly inaccessible to Christian influence ; therefore the course pursued by them is not the model of the course proper to be pursued by an ambassador of Christ, when preaching to a professedly Christian people, who have in their own hands the entire power of making or repealing laws.

“ *Resolved*, That the Christian ministry is Heaven's great agent in enlightening and purifying the public mind on this, as on all other great moral questions ; therefore,

“ *Resolved*, That it be commended to all the ministers in this synod to preach at least one sermon during the year on the subject of the immorality of slavery, so far as in their judgment it shall seem to be their duty in existing circumstances.”

The Presbyterian Synod of the Western Reserve, Ohio, assembled at Painesville, Sept. 28, 1837. passed the following resolutions with but *one* dissenting voice :

“1. *Resolved*, That although this Synod, in former years, has passed resolutions on the subject of slavery, yet the constantly increasing developments of this system of oppression, while they fully prove the correctness of the positions heretofore assumed by us, call for a farther expression of our sentiments.

“2. That we deeply lament the attempts made by some professed disciples of Christ, both in and out of the ministry, to find a justification for this sin in the Holy Scriptures, whereby the sanction of a supremely benevolent God is claimed for a supremely selfish system, and occasion is given to men to deny the divine origin of the Bible.

“3. That the sin of holding men in slavery, like all other sins, should be immediately repented of and forsaken by those who are guilty of it.

“4. That all Christians, not directly guilty of this sin, who would be on the side of God and truth, are called upon to bear their solemn testimony against it ; and that any connivance on their part makes them accessaries to it in the sight of God.

“5. That the common prejudice which exists in this country against our colored brethren, is an obstacle which must be removed before the system of slavery can be effectually demolished.

“6. That the gospel ministry, in faithfulness to their office, are called upon in the exercise of their own judgment, to exhibit the heinous guilt of a system which converts men into property ; subverts the family relation—forbids its victims to read the word of God which he has commanded all to search, and thus sealing up their immortal minds in the darkness of heathenism in the midst of an enlightened community ; and which, until repented of and forsaken, will bring upon us, as a nation, the righteous frowns of Him who holds all our destinies in his omnipotent hand.”

We now turn to the testimony of another branch of Zion.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

We place this Church third in order, although Baptists trace immersion up through the Waldenses to the primitive Churches, through the Apostles and Christ to John the Baptist, or at least as far as Mosheim, who says, “their true origin is hid in the *depths* of *antiquity* and is, of consequence, difficult to be ascertained ;” because, in the marshalling off of the sects after the Reformation they were thus entitled, and because, for a full century after the settling of America by Europeans, the Baptists numbered only about seventeen churches in this country. We have experienced more than ordinary difficulty in procuring ancient Baptist testimony against slaveholding, but have not been altogether unsuccessful. It was not to be expected that the history of a people so famous for religious liberty, would be so barren on the subject of universal natural liberty. No people have been more strenuous for the rights of conscience, or perhaps suffered more from legislative enactments, and otherwise, in this country than they, and yet no people have been much more backward in

pleading the cause of the oppressed humanity. But this is not the result of the principles which lie at the basis of the Baptist Church, but of extraneous circumstances—circumstances which have induced, it is feared, the American Baptists to sacrifice free principles to popularity—humanity to ecclesiastical domination.

Rev. David Benedict, in his history of Baptists, says, “The supporters of believers’ baptism have, under every form of government, been the advocates for liberty; and for this reason, they have never flourished much, except in those governments where some degree of freedom has been maintained. Arbitrary states have always oppressed them, and driven them for refuge to milder regions. They can not live in tyrannical states, and free countries are the only places to seek for them, for their whole public religion is impracticable without freedom. In political changes they have always been friendly to the cause of liberty, and their passion for it has at different times led some into acts of indiscretion, and scenes of danger. But with a few exceptions, we may say in truth, that the Baptists have always adhered to their leading maxim, to be subject to the powers that be; and all the favor they, as Christians, have asked of civil governments has been, to *give them their Bibles and let them alone.*”

How, as “*advocates for liberty under every form of government,*” Baptists in the United States can refuse to open their mouths for the dumb, and plead the cause of the oppressed millions of our nation, we can not divine. There must be a departure from first principles. The Baptists of England and of the West Indies, were among the most zealous “advocates for liberty under that monarchical form of government,” nor could the prisons of Jamaica frighten them from their holy purpose; they ceased not to plead, till those whose cause they advocated were elevated from slaves into freemen. Surely, then, Baptists in this Republic, might dare become and remain the stern and unyielding advocates for liberty, while a single human being under “this form of government” is held a slave. But, alas, for those “advocates for liberty under every form of government,” under our own form of government, those of the North generally neglect to plead for liberty for the slave, while those of the South, if Dr. Lucius Bolles may be relied on as authority, “ARE GENERALLY, BOTH MINISTERS AND PEOPLE, SLAVEHOLDERS.” Surely the glory of liberty has departed from our Baptist brethren—but, we pray God, the time is near at hand, when they will return to first principles and show to the world that “*they can not live in tyrannical states,*” and that must be a tyrannical state, which makes a large proportion of its population slaves. If “*free countries*” are the only places to seek for the Baptists,” they must not only give up slaveholding themselves, but even quit the slave states, or else labor assiduously for the abolition of slavery there. And to this they are bound, because “*their whole public religion is impracticable without freedom,*” or at least they must take no slaves into their communion. Nor should the Baptists, either North or South, object to making strenuous efforts for the abolition of slavery on the ground that abolition may seem to be a political measure, because, as Dr. Benedict continues, “*in political changes they have always been friendly to liberty.*” If

Southern Baptists want an example in the cause of manumission, we point them to their own excellent Rev. Robert Carter of Virginia, who in a letter to Mr. Rippon of London, says, "*the toleration of slavery indicates very great depravity of mind,*" and in conformity to this sentiment of truth, manumitted all his slaves amounting to nearly eight hundred persons. If the toleration of slavery indicates very great depravity of mind, what must its defence, on Scripture grounds, by Christians and Christian Ministers, show ?

We shall now present some extracts from a sermon on the "Commerce in the Human Species, &c. by Abraham Booth, A. M. Pastor of a Baptist Church, preached in London, January 29, 1792." Mr. Booth is recommended by Rev. Dr. F. A. Cox, of London, as being a standard author with the Baptists. We should be glad to see the whole of this sermon placed in the hands of every Baptist in the United States, for though in every particular it may not coincide with the views of abolitionists of the present day, its careful perusal could not fail to leave a very deep impress or thorough conviction of the wickedness of slaveholding.

The first extract will show that slavery, such as ours, is a fit subject for discussion in the Lord's house and on the Sabbath day. "That slavery, against which I am going to plead, is not of a civil or political kind, but entirely of a *personal* nature. For though it is much to be wished that liberty, in a civil or political sense, may be enjoyed and flourish, without licentiousness ; yet I never thought subjects of that nature proper to be discussed in the pulpit, and especially on the Lord's day. But the exercise of moral justice, of benevolence, and humanity, being enforced by every principle of evangelical truth ; an endeavor to promote those virtuous affections toward our extremely degraded and oppressed fellow creatures, the Negroes, must be completely consistent with the commands of divine law, the grace of the glorious gospel, and the solemnities of public worship." This is the doctrine of modern abolitionists, and it is the doctrine of Jesus ;—the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. And if the Sabbath was made to advocate the cause of bleeding humanity, surely the pulpit and the ministry should be subservient thereunto. Let the Baptist pulpit urge the claims of moral justice, benevolence, and humanity," in behalf of two and a half million of despoiled and robbed people in this country, and it will do a work, not only consonant with "*the grace of the glorious gospel*" but COMPLETELY CONSISTENT WITH THE SOLEMNITIES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP," and prove that people to be, what they profess to be, "*the advocates of liberty.*"

As to criminals, Mr. Booth remarks such "a man may deserve slavery—*slavery*, in a strict and proper sense, that he may be an example to others, and compensate, as far as lies in his power, the injuries done to society by an abuse of his own liberty. Yet even in this case, the holding of his posterity not guilty of similar crimes, in a state of slavery, would be a *flagrant violation of justice*"—"for such are completely entitled to personal freedom." How great a violation of justice, not to mention humanity and religion, must it be for slaveholders to hold the posterity of their *innocent* slaves in slavery ! if it be a FLAGRANT violation of justice to make slaves of the children of criminals?

After showing that "none but strangers of the Canaanitish nations were to be purchased by the Jews for *bond-servants*," Mr. Booth remarks, "the lives even of the Canaanitish people were not, by cruel bondage, rendered a burden to them : for though, in a *comparative* sense, they were slaves, and excluded from respectable stations, yet they were under the protection of divine law, and enjoyed the rights of men, though not of citizens. An essentially different situation, therefore, from that of the negro slaves in our own plantation !" And can the Baptist slaveholders of our country say, their slaves enjoy the rights of men in any sense of the word ? And can they justify themselves in treating innocent men worse than the Jews treated the Canaanites, to destroy whom they had the divine authority ? And can Northern Baptists, in any possible manner, justify themselves in suffering such wickedness upon their church brethren unrebuked ?

The buying and selling of human beings is a consequence of holding them as slaves,—the two are inseparable—they are equally inhumane—and the right to do the one must have the same basis as the right to do the other. These are positions not changed by locality or geographical lines. On this subject, says Mr. Booth, "Supposing the lawfulness of purchasing and enslaving our innocent fellow-creatures were granted, it would be natural to ask—For *whom* it is lawful, and on *what description* of unoffending persons does the exercise of that despotic right fall ? Is it lawful for the English, the French, the Europeans in general, to buy and enslave the Africans ? But whence did they, rather than those very Africans, derive that dreadful right ? I say, *dreadful* right. For the idea of any individual, or any people, possessing authority to treat the innocent as if they were flagitiously guilty, is hateful, and shocking to reason, to conscience, and to common sense. Whence then, I demand, is that authority derived ? From the Europeans professing Christianity, the Africans, in question, being Pagans ? But, as those Pagans are men, are neighbors, are brethren of the human kind, so Christianity is the religion of truth and justice, of benevolence and peace. It inspires them by whom it is known and not disgraced, with love to God, and to their neighbors : whereas the *traffic in MAN*, (a phraseology including all slaveholding) is unjust and cruel, is barbarous and savage." Mr. Booth goes on to refute the idea, that this *dreadful right* can be authorized by divine law to the Israelites, and then adds, "Must the right under consideration, then, be inferred from what is called the law of *Nature* ? But that is the same in Africa, as it is in Europe ; entirely the same all over the globe. According to this law, be the station of an innocent negro ever so obscure, his poverty ever so great, his manners ever so rude, or his mental capacities ever so contracted, he has an equal claim to personal liberty with any man upon earth. For the rights of humanity being common to the whole of our species, are the same in every part of our world." By what right, then, will Baptists, a Christian denomination, professing to be "the advocates of liberty under every form of government," continue enslaving men or holding innocent men and their posterity as slaves,—a work denounced by one of their own most honored ministers, as hateful, "AND SHOCK-

ING TO REASON, TO CONSCIENCE, AND TO COMMON SENSE,"—"UNJUST AND CRUEL, BARBAROUS, AND SAVAGE."

But will Baptists plead the golden rule to justify their slaveholding? Hear Mr. Booth. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, is another of our Lord's precepts. This admirably just and comprehensive command, requires each of us to treat every man, as we might reasonably wish every one to treat us, were situations and circumstances reversed. It considers every man *AS A MAN*, and requires that he be so treated. It impartially views every man, as having capacities, feelings, and rights, peculiar to his own species: and it forbids those capacities to be insulted by degradation, those feelings by unmerited pain, and those rights by injustice. But is not the horrid *MAN-TRADE*, and the detestable connections in which it stands, a manifest outrage on this most salutary precept?—He, therefore, who dares to vindicate such conduct might, on his *own* principles, be justly kidnapped, bought and sold, for a similar state of slavery. For who among all *the traders in men, and holders of slaves*, would think himself treated with equity, were he, after having been kidnapped by a villain," (or been born in a Christian land,) "to find his bones and sinews, his bowels and blood, exposed to sale, and actually purchased by one whose profession it was to *trade in the persons of men*. Ezek. 27, 13. The very thought of such a catastrophe stings with distress; and yet, if any man upon earth deserves to be so treated, it must be he who has made it his business to buy and to enslave his innocent fellow-creatures." This is the business of every slave-holder—for if he may have scruples about kidnapping, he has none in enslaving the helpless offspring of his innocent slaves. Surely it is a thousand fold more despicable to

Ignobly snatch the babes, new born, from the breasts
Of helpless mothers, stamping them as slaves—
While yet the seal of heaven is fresh upon them,

than to kidnap a full grown man—and yet every Baptist slaveholder, and every other slaveholder in the land, does this very thing—this great wickedness, and justifies it by the golden rule! Oh that light would break forth out of Zion—and the sun of liberty rise once more upon the American Baptist Church.

A few days after preaching the sermon from which we have made so many extracts, the author wrote to a friend in Philadelphia, in which, after speaking of this sermon and other matter, he says, "I should rejoice to hear that not only the importation of negroes into your American States were abolished, but that slavery itself were utterly banished from them all. For I have not a stronger conviction of scarcely any thing, than that slaveholding is wicked, and inconsistent with a Christian character. It is impossible to prove, that an innocent *BLACK* man has not as much right to his personal liberty, as an innocent white man; and to me it is evident, that whoever would purchase an innocent black man, to make him a slave, would with equal readiness *purchase* a *WHITE* man, for the same purpose, could he do it with equal impunity, and with no more disgrace. *Surely nothing can be more inconsistent, than zeal to maintain our civil liberty, and a disposition to deprive our innocent fellow-*

creatures of their personal liberty—OR TO CONTINUE THEM IN SLAVERY, WHEN REDUCED TO THAT ABJECT STATE.”

We have drawn thus largely on the sermon of this venerable Baptist Minister, to show our Baptist brethren, that in asking them to aid us in the present struggle for human rights, we are only asking them to assert their own ancient principles, to rescue their own banners from the grasp of slavery, to ask for the old paths cleared up and described by their own authorized pioneers, and walk therein—to cleanse their own portion of Zion from the foul sin of slaveholding. We will close our quotations from this sermon by urging upon your attention with all earnestness, the language of Mr. Booth, “Let your ardent and frequent prayers *be accompanied with prudent, peaceful, and steady efforts, in order to procure the total abolition of that criminal traffic, and of the cruel slavery consequent upon it.* This is manifestly enjoined by the law of the Lord, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*”

More independent and thorough action is to be expected from Baptists as a people in favor of the enslaved, than from either of the other large branches of the church, because their church government is congregational, and they acknowledge only advisory power in their ecclesiastical bodies. We are not unaware, however, that though but advisory power is claimed and confessed, the resolutions of those bodies, have not unfrequently with Baptists, the force and influence of authority, and are regarded by them as having the sanctions of law. But we have no complaint on the subject of church government, we would only remember that consistency with profession is a jewel, and on a subject of that nature would say, let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. But we can not quit this branch of Christ’s Kingdom, without adding, that many Baptist Churches are already coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty—against slavery, the mighty foe of the American Church. We present the cheering testimony of but two Baptist ecclesiastical bodies.

The general conference of the Free Will Baptists, representing a body of 35,000 members, passed the following resolutions on the 10th of October, 1837, with perfect unanimity, all voting, except a single member, on the last.

Resolved, That slavery, as it exists in our country, is a system of tyranny—more cruel and wicked than the oppression and wrong practiced by any other civilized nation in the known world, upon any class of its citizens: That it is a system murderous in its nature, its tendencies, and its actual results: a system of robbery, robbery most aggravated—robbing man of all his rights, personal, civil, and domestic—his rights corporeal and intellectual—his rights temporal, spiritual and eternal;—robbing God of souls which he has made, that they might glorify and enjoy Him, and for whom Christ has died that they might live unto Him.

Resolved, That we concur in the principles of the American Anti-Slavery Society, as expressed in their Declaration of Sentiments, and that we approve its measures for the removal of slavery, as those measures are set forth in its constitution, viz: by promulgation of moral truth in relation to the sin of slavery, and the righteousness and practicability of immediate emancipation.

The following letter is from the Rev. John Butler, in relation to the Maine Baptist Convention.

NORTH YARMOUTH, October 6th, 1837.

Dear Brother Garrison—I returned yesterday from Bath, having attended the meeting of the Maine Baptist Convention. It was a very interesting season. The committee appointed on resolutions, reported in favor of the various benevolent efforts of the day, among which was the anti-slavery cause. The following resolutions were passed, after some discussion, with only six opposing votes.

Resolved, That a being made in the image of God, possessing an intelligent, immortal spirit, cannot be reduced to the condition of mere property, without doing great violence to the authority and laws of God, and committing a most degrading outrage upon the light of nature.

Resolved, That those ministers and religious bodies, who have published to the world, that the Bible justifies the system of American slavery, have greatly erred, and inflicted a grievous reproach upon the honor of God and his word.

Resolved, That it is with deep humiliation and sorrow, that this Convention is obliged to admit the fact, that the sin of slavery extensively prevails in the Christian church, and that many of the professed ministers of the gospel are slaveholders; and that some of them, and many other church members, do actually buy and sell their brethren and sisters in Christ.

Resolved, That whereas the Bible is virtually withheld from nearly one-sixth part of the population of our country, who are in slavery, we do earnestly recommend to all our brethren, that when their hearts are moved with compassion in view of the perishing condition of the heathen world, that they also pray for the perishing slaves in our own land; and that they observe the 4th Monday evening in each month, as a season of prayer for the immediate and peaceful removal of this evil from the church, and from the whole world.

My Dear Sir—I consider the present a very critical period in the anti-slavery cause. A temporizing spirit is abroad in this section of the country, but the enlightened, conscientious friends of the oppressed will stand fast, sustained as they are by the immutable principles of truth. The above resolutions were passed with but six opposing votes. It is said that there were other members, who, if they had not been absent, would have voted against them. This may be true; but a greater number were absent, who, if they had been present, would have voted for them.

A large majority of the sixteen thousand members of Baptist churches in Maine are decided abolitionists. Several of our Associations have the present season passed resolutions, fully sustaining the principles of immediate abolition, and some of them without the opposition of a single vote. It is not a little wonderful that this should be the state of our churches, when we consider how little has been done to enlighten them, and how much has been done calculated to misguide their minds on this important subject. But, blessed be God, means are about to be put into operation, which, I trust, will set the most of those right, who are now in doubt, and animate and direct those who are already willing to labor and pray in the cause of the oppressed. The 'Eastern

Baptist,' published at Brunswick, is to become from this time a more prominent advocate for the enslaved. There are a few among us, who probably will live and die pro-slavery men. Is it inquired, who are they? We reply, they are those whose honor or interest, or both, seem to require that they say and do nothing but what shall be approved of by the slaveholders. I know of nothing but the temporizing spirit which has gone forth, which can in the least impede the progress of the cause of the oppressed; and even this 'shall not hurt nor destroy,' if we are but prudent, decided, and persevering. Let us, then, avoid every error which would give the enemy any advantage. We are sure of victory while contending for the principles of immediate, unconditional and everlasting emancipation.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN BUTLER.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

We come now to the Methodist Episcopal Church, the younger of the four great denominations of Christians. This church sprung up amidst the turmoils and struggles of our revolutionary strife for freedom, and though its organization preceded the adoption of our national Constitution but about four years, it has already reached a vigorous maturity. Had the M. E. Church continued to sustain and vindicate its original high standard of natural right and noble opposition to slavery, it is not too much to say, the American Church would now be pure from the sin of slavery, instead of being the strong tower of slaveholders as it now is. For many years this church remained the sacred depository of humanity, and during that time was instrumental in keeping something of a tender conscience in the other denominations on the sin of slaveholding, but, when she yielded to the lethean influences of slavery, the whole church imbrued itself in the blood of innocence. The crown has fallen from her youthful brow, the fine gold has become dim,—she hath left her first love for humanity, and now the voice of God, through the sighs and tears and groans of two and a half million bleeding Americans, calls her to repent and do her first works over again. Let American Methodists listen to the voice of the founder of Methodism, and compare therewith the language of modern Methodism, and tell us whether it is likely the venerable Westley would be permitted to repeat the sentiments he uttered more than half a century ago in one-tenth part of the churches now called by his name. After showing the nature of slavery, its origin, &c. he says, (Vol. 10 Wesley's Works, page 504,)

“And this equally concerns every gentleman that has an estate in our American plantations; yea, all slaveholders, of whatever rank and degree; *seeing men buyers are exactly on a level with men stealers*. Indeed you say, ‘I pay honestly for my goods; and I am not concerned to know how they are come by.’ Nay, but you are; you are deeply concerned to know they are honestly come by. Otherwise you are a partaker with a thief, and are not a jot honest than he. But you know they are not honestly come by; you know they are procured by means nothing near so innocent as picking of pockets, house breaking, or robbery on the highway. You know they are procured by a deliberate series of more complicated villany, of fraud, robbery, and murder, than

was ever practised either by Mohammedans or Pagans; in particular, by murders, of all kinds; by the blood of the innocent poured upon the ground like water. Now it is your money that pays the merchant, and through him the captain and African butchers. You therefore are guilty, yea, principally guilty, of all these frauds, robberies, and murders. You are the spring that puts all the rest in motion: they would not stir a step without you; therefore, the blood of all these wretches who die before their time, whether in their country or elsewhere, lies upon your head. ‘The blood of thy brother,’ (for, whether thou wilt believe it or no, such he is in the sight of Him that made him) ‘crieth against thee from the earth,’ from the ship, and from the waters. O, whatever it costs, put a stop to its cry before it is too late; instantly, at any price, were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from blood guiltiness! Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, thy lands, are at present stained with blood. Surely it is enough; accumulate no more guilt; spill no more the blood of the innocent! Do not hire another to shed blood; do not pay him for doing it! Whether you are a Christian or no, show yourself a man!—Be not more savage than a lion or a bear!

“Perhaps you will say, ‘I do not buy any negroes; I only use those left me by my father.’ So far it is well; but is it enough to satisfy your own conscience! *Had your father, have you, has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, even setting Revelation aside.* It cannot be, that either war or contract, can give any man such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen. Much less is it possible that any child of man should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air; and *no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature.*

“If, therefore, you have any regard to justice, (to say nothing of mercy or the revealed law of God,) render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion! Be gentle toward all men: and see that you invariably do unto every one as you would he should do unto you.”

In the above extract we see the Father of Methodism placing the slaveholder and slave-buyer exactly on the same level with men-stealers. And that is doubtless the degrading level to which slaveholders belong. He farther declares to every such person, “Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, thy lands are at present stained with blood!” And yet the Methodist E. Church holds myriads of such persons in full communion and fellowship, together with hundreds of ministers as deeply stained with blood! Oh, ye Methodists, inquire for the old paths and walk therein!

Nor is that oracle of genuine Methodism, Dr. Adam Clark, less severe. His great mind could scarcely conceive of a punishment adequate for the vile iniquity of holding men as slaves in a Christian land. He says, “*In heathen countries slavery was, in some sort, excusable; but among Christians, it is an ENORMITY and a CRIME, for which PERDITION has scarcely an adequate state of punishment.*”

And says the learned and judicious Richard Watson, than whom Methodism can scarcely boast a more able defender of its doctrines and principles,

“ If it was wrong to steal men from Africa, to reduce them to a state of bondage, it is, for the same reason, to retain them in slavery. If you condemn the first thief, and the first receiver of the stolen goods, how will you justify those who, knowing them to be stolen, continue to retain them ! I confess that I cannot see how the perpetuation of an injury can cause it to cease to be an injury, or by what process an acknowledged wrong can be transmuted into a right by continuing in it. My argument then is, if it was wrong to enslave the negroes, it is wrong to keep them in hopeless bondage ; and it follows, that, after this country had renounced the African slave-trade, it was bound by the very principles on which that wretched traffic was repudiated, to have taken measures for the liberation of all who had thus been wickedly reduced to a state of captivity, at the earliest period at which their liberation could have been made consistent with their own interests, and long before this time to have converted them into a free, industrious, and happy peasantry.”

Thus the three great lights of Methodism pour their concentrated beams on the sin of slaveholding, and show it to possess so great an affinity to slave-trading and manstealing, that with them it should be proscribed as piracy, and driven instantly from the pale of the church.

In addition to the foregoing testimony, that of the whole conference of 1780 will be added. Four years prior to the Episcopal organization of Methodism, its ministry, in conference assembled, declared,

“ The Conference acknowledges that slavery is CONTRARY TO THE LAWS OF GOD, MAN, AND NATURE, *and hurtful to society*; CONTRARY TO THE DICTATES OF CONSCIENCE and PURE RELIGION; *and doing what we would not that others should do unto us*; and they pass their DISAPPROBATION upon all our friends who keep slaves, and they advise their freedom.”

Such doctrine, preached and carried out as discipline in the M. E. Church, would soon cleanse her skirts of the blood of slaveholding, and create an interest in behalf of holy freedom, which would be felt and responded to throughout the evangelical churches of our land.

It would be to be expected, that a church remoulding itself, in the midst of a people yet covered with sweat and blood by their mighty and continued efforts to throw off the yoke of oppression, would catch the spirit of freedom, and on her altars kindle the fire of liberty, and establish rules enjoining her priests to keep pure and bright the vestal flame. Such was the case with the Methodist Episcopal Church. While yet in its infancy, breathing the spirit of reformation, and anxious to give a practical illustration of its foundation doctrine, that “ *Jesus Christ tasted death for every man*,” according to Lee’s *His. of Methodists*, at its organization, among other rules against slavery, it adopted the followings

“ Every member of our society shall legally execute and record an instrument [for the purpose of setting every slave in his possession free] within the space of two years.”

If this was not enjoining immediate emancipation, it was so near immedi-

ateism that all abolitionists would rejoice, if that church would now adopt and require of its members, the practice of a like rule. And why should not that church return to its primitive love of man? Because slavery is less iniquitous, or benevolence less a duty? But this abolition church went still farther. It made its ministers the authorized guardians of the oppressed. It required them to exclude every slaveholding member from its communion, who would not comply with its requisitions of manumission, as will be seen by the following rule.

“Every person concerned who will not comply with these rules, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw from our society within the twelve months following, the notice being given him as aforesaid; otherwise, *the assistant shall exclude him from the society.*—Lee’s His. p. 101.

So much as to the mere holding of slaves. The buying, selling, and giving away of slaves, unless for the express purpose of securing their freedom, subjected the members of the M. E. Church, originally to a more summary method of cure, hence it declared that,

“Those who *bought or sold* SLAVES, or *gave them away*, unless on purpose to free them, *should be expelled immediately,*”—Lee’s His. p. 101.

Were this line of humanity and righteousness now drawn, that church might deprive itself of the ministerial services of such slaveholders as Mr. Wynans, and Dr. Capers, but, in lieu thereof, would receive the rich blessings of the widow and fatherless, and commence a revival of religion worthy to be considered as the dawning of millennial glory.

The discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has not always spoken the same language on the subject of slavery; but up to the present time, it declares the church to be as much as ever convinced of the evil of slavery. But in the face of this declaration of discipline, the Georgia Annual Conference, in Dec. 1837, “Resolved, *that slavery is not a moral evil.*”

And although the present discipline declares slavery to be so far a fit subject for the action of the church, “that no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom; and that “any travelling preacher, who becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, *by any means*, shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.” Yet the South Carolina Conference, as lately as January 1838, “Resolved, *That Slavery is not a proper subject for the action of the church.* It can not but be exceedingly painful to the philanthropic Methodist, to see annual conferences thus taking a belligerent position to the discipline, on a subject so deeply interesting to his heart. And while he reflects on the influence of such resolutions from slaveholding communities, he lays hold of the mysterious destroyer which has made the discipline, of his church, once the giant foe of slavery, an emaciated skeleton, leaning on the arm of its seducer for support. While the discipline “*required unceasing efforts for the EXTIRPATION of the CRYING EVIL of Slavery,*” the monster was kept within tolerable bounds; but, since the M. E. Church embraces thousands of slave-

nolding members, and hundreds of slaveholding ministers in its communion. Slavery keeps the discipline in most humiliating bondage. Slavery has made the Discipline so powerless, that annual Conferences dare declare what John Wesley terms **THE VILEST EVIL THAT EVER SAW THE SUN**, an improper subject for the action of the church—and the General Conference dare not deny it. Oh, Methodism ! where is the star of hope thou didst unveil to the weeping eyes of crushed humanity, when erst thine own beams were thrown athwart the chaos of infidelity in our land ? Gone—driven into the midnight abyss of slavery, by the unceasing efforts of thine own membership and ministry, till not a ray therefrom can cheer the weary fugitive from oppression, as he follows that everlasting incendiary of God, the north star, to a land of liberty, where Episcopal Methodism is unknown.

Bear with us, we beseech you, Methodist brethren, while we urge our plea for the slave once more. We know the great influence you can exert against slavery, and the strong arm you may put forth for the deliverance of the oppressed, and would therefore continue to speak to you the “truth in love,” persuading ourselves, that our labor shall not be in vain. We are not, however, unaware of the adverse position taken by some of the mightiest princes of your Israel on this subject, and of their almost unbounded influence over the church, and would therefore urge you, not to entertain a feeling of opposition to such, but for the sake of our holy religion, to remember, that matters most deeply and vitally affecting the church, “may be sometimes hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed by our heavenly Father, unto babes.” Anti-slavery effort and principle, are too much interwoven into the early history and experience, and original texture of the Methodist Episcopal Church, not to command the serious attention and combined efforts of its present membership and ministry, when they are made sensible thereof, and become more anxious to promote genuine Methodism, than to throw their ecclesiastical influence and popularity over an extended territory, however much corrupted with slavery it may be. With this persuasion, we present the subject of slavery, as it was set forth in the Methodist Episcopal discipline in the year 1801. It should here be premised, that a change came over the discipline a few years after ; and the honest and full expression of disapprobation to slavery, to which we have alluded, found no more place in the discipline. A candid perusal of the following article, and a careful comparison thereof with the meagre and scarcely breathing article on the same subject, in the present discipline, can not but awaken in all humane Methodists, a tender and intense solicitude, that their church might speedily re-occupy, the high and holy ground of humanity it has so long abandoned.

METH. EPIS. DISCIPLINE OF 1831.—OF SLAVERY.

“QUEST. What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of this crying evil of African slavery ?

ANS. 1. We declare that we are more than ever convinced of the great evil of African slavery, which still exists in these United States, and do most earnestly recommend to the Yearly Conferences, Quarterly Meetings, and to

those who have the oversight of Districts and Circuits, to be exceedingly cautious what persons they admit to official stations in our church ; and in the case of future admission to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them, immediately, or gradually, as the laws of the States respectively, and the circumstances of the case will admit ; and we do fully authorize all the Yearly Conferences to make whatever regulations they judge proper, in the present case, respecting the admission of persons to official stations in our church.

2. When any travelling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, *by any means*, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our church, unless he executes, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives.

3. No slave-holder shall be received into society till the preacher who has the oversight of the Circuit, has spoken to him freely and faithfully upon the subject of slavery.

4. Every member of the society, who sells a slave, shall immediately, after full proof, be excluded from the society ; and if any member of our society purchase a slave, the ensuing Quarterly Meeting shall determine on the number of years in which the slave so purchased would work out the price of his purchase. And the person so purchasing shall immediately after such determination, execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave at the expiration of the term determined by the Quarterly Meeting. And in default of his executing such instrument of manumission, or on his refusal to submit his case to the judgment of the Quarterly Meeting, such member shall be excluded the society. Provided also, that in the case of a female slave, it shall be inserted in the aforesaid instrument of manumission, that all her children who shall be born during the years of her servitude, shall be free at the following times, namely—every female child at the age of *twenty-one*, and every male child at the age of *twenty-five*. Nevertheless, if the member of our society, executing the said instrument of manumission, judge it proper, he may fix the times of manumission of the female slaves before-mentioned, at an earlier age than that which is prescribed above.

5. The preachers and other members of our society, are requested to consider the subject of negro slavery with *deep attention* ; and that they *impart to the General Conferences*, through the medium of the yearly conferences, or otherwise, *any important thoughts upon the subject*, that the Conference may have full light in order to take further steps toward the eradicating this ENORMOUS EVIL from that part of the Church of God, to which they are connected.

6. The Annual Conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the legislatures of those states, in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose. These addresses shall urge, in the most respectful, but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of the slaves ; proper committees shall be appointed by the Annual Conferences, out of the most respectable of our friends, for the conducting of the business ; and the presiding elders, deacons, and traveling preachers, shall procure as many proper signatures as possible to the addresses,

and give all the assistance in their power, in every respect, to aid the committees, and to further this blessed undertaking. LET THIS BE CONTINUED FROM YEAR TO YEAR, TILL THE DESIRED END BE ACCOMPLISHED."

How different the tone of Episcopal Methodism now! Then slavery quailed beneath its Christian rebuke; now its voice excites no other sensations than that of approving infidelity. Why? Because Methodists and Methodist ministers are slaveholders. What a bitter contradiction; a believer in the doctrine that Jesus Christ did, by the grace of God, taste death for every man—holding such absolute dominion over those for whom Christ died as to claim and treat them as chattels personal to all intents and purposes whatsoever! That a heathen should do so vile a thing would be base; that a Methodist should be guilty thereof is to slander the cross of Christ; but that Methodist Ministers should descend to such horrible wickedness is "to crucify to themselves the son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame"—to turn traitor to humanity and religion and brand themselves with eternal infamy! But we would rather direct our Methodist brethren to the tender exhortation of the Most High: "What have I done unto thee, oh, my people, wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me." Surely the progress of Episcopal Methodism in this country was not so slow as to require the assistance of slavery to render it popular. No church can boast of having "lengthened its cords, strengthened its stakes, and spread forth the curtains of its habitations," so rapidly and to such great extent in any country. The Lord had not forsaken it, that it went down to Egypt for aid. Would that the Methodist Episcopal church would sacrifice that aid—that it would hew slavery as Samuel did Agag before the Lord. Then would the Lord have no longer cause to exclaim of it, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me—my repentings are kindled together."

We shall only farther add the following extract from the "Address of the Methodist Wesleyan Conference in England, to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

"It has already come to your knowledge as a matter of public notoriety, that by the blessing of God on the efforts and influence of our connection and on the *combined endeavors of the religious public* of our beloved country, a great measure for the emancipation of the slaves in all the territories of Great Britain was eventually conducted to a successful issue in the Imperial Legislature; and has since been carried into practical effect in all the colonies of the empire, with various degrees of completeness, but universally with SAFETY and ADVANTAGE, and with results which mightily encourage us to go forward in our earnest attempts to enlighten and evangelize the whole population, to which favorable access is thus freely opened. Our American brethren will doubtless allow us the fraternal liberty to express our conviction that GREAT SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES are *opposed* to the *continuance* of slavery in a *Christian state*; that the permission of it, is one of those deviations from natural equity and evangelical purity which call for *further deviations* abet and maintain them that it is CONTRARY to the PRECEPTS of CHRISTIANITY, and *violates* and *counteracts* the *principles* and *obligations* by

which the Gospel urges those precepts. We trust that *your connection having* ALREADY BEGUN *to resist and condemn this baneful system,* will, in its own way, be freely and providentially led to *such practical steps* as shall produce a *consentaneous opinion, feeling and purpose* amongst *your own people*; and will then have the GLORY of the PUBLIC OPINION of your great and increasing population, to such *decided views* as will result in an UNANIMOUS REJECTION of SLAVERY and its *social mischiefs*, on the ground of its REPUGNANCY to the LAWS of CHRIST."

But we are not without cheering intelligence, showing a deep sympathy in large portions of the members and ministers of this church, for our enslaved countrymen. In this city, in Utica, and other places in this state, as well as throughout the bounds of the Eastern Conferences, in Ohio and Pennsylvania also, Methodists are doing much to bring their church back to the old paths pointed out by WESLEY, recommended by CLARKE and WATSON, and travelled by her indefatigable and fearless COKE. Official influence is much against those efforts, but as strong and mighty as is that influence in that Church, Methodism is too vigorous and healthful, not eventually to bring that influence to subserve the cause of human nature. In six out of the sixteen Northern Conferences there is already a majority of Abolitionists, and in four a very large majority. In the other Conferences there are many Abolitionists, so that in all there are supposed to be no less than eight hundred traveling, besides about as many local preachers, who are Abolitionists. In many of the Conferences strong expressions of anti-slavery sentiment have been offered, but have not been passed, because the Bishop presiding has refused to put them to vote. We find, however, that the following preamble and resolution were passed nearly unanimously at the last year's session of the Pittsburg Conference, held at Steubenville, Ohio.

"Whereas, The rule which prohibits the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them, has recently been subjected to various constructions, not only differing from each other, but in the judgment of many of the ministers of our Church, neutralizing the force and bearing of this plain and important rule: We, therefore, consider it a privilege, and, above all, our bounden duty, to offer the following resolution as the sense of this Conference respecting the rule in question :—

Resolved, That in the judgment of this Conference ALL TRAFFIC in the souls and bodies of our fellow-men, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, which either originates or PERPETUATES SLAVERY, *is a direct violation both of the spirit and letter* of our general rule on this subject."

The following resolutions are said to have passed, without a dissenting voice, at the session of the Genesee Conference, held at Perry, in this State.

Resolved, That in the judgment of this Conference, our Discipline in declaring that slavery is a "*great evil*," is to be understood as pronouncing not upon its civil and political so much as upon its moral character.

Resolved, That "the buying of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them," are terms that, in their obvious import, relate as well to the *internal* as to the foreign traffic in human beings; so that the buying

and selling of men, women, and children, with the intention either to originate or *perpetuate* their enslavement, is a violation of the disciplinary interdict.

Thus have we called the attention of the four great denominations of Evangelical Christians in this country to the fact, that the doctrines of modern Abolitionists are no other than the doctrines taught by the most honored and pious men of their several denominations. And though we may not have succeeded as well as might be desired, yet the only difficulty has been our limited control of the necessary documents. We believe, however, we have been so far successful, that no candid disciple of Jesus will read prayerfully the weighty and clear testimony we have adduced, without acknowledging the old principles of Abolition to be the great principles of righteousness, the principles taught by the fathers of the several denominations, as well as by the inspired writers. We shall, therefore, so soon as we have added a few remarks and quotations in relation to several other branches of Zion, proceed to make some brief inferential remarks to Christians of all denominations, in view of the great question under consideration.

The time-honored Congregational Church has not been altogether silent on the abolition question. Indeed, it would be matter of greatest surprise, if that nursery of free principles should not send forth many scions of freedom, during the momentous struggle which is to result in the overthrow of our republican institutions, or the utter destruction of slavery in this nation. We give the following testimony.

“The General Association of the Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts, at its meeting in June, 1837, UNANIMOUSLY adopted the following expression of sentiment :

“ *Whereas*, Slavery, as it exists in our country is a great moral and social evil, and

“ *Whereas*, No man should feel indifferent respecting that which the God of heaven disapproves, therefore,

“1. *Resolved*, That the assumed right of holding our fellow-men in bondage, working them without wages, and buying and selling them as property, is obviously contrary to the principles of natural justice and the spirit of the Gospel, offensive to God, oppressive to man, and ought to cease with the least possible delay.

“2. *Resolved*, That we approve of the *free and candid discussion* of the subject of slavery, and also *all other methods of diffusing light* and promoting correct moral sentiment which may have an influence to do away the evil.”

The Fairfield (Vt.) Congregational Association has passed thorough resolutions, from which we extract one :

“ *Resolved*, That we can hold no fellowship with ministers or churches, now adhering to the principles, or practicing the abominations of slavery.”

The following is among the resolutions of the Wyndham County (Vt.) Association :

“ *Resolved*, That under the guidance and by the help of Almighty God, we will do all that in us lies, consistent with the Gospel, to overthrow this detestable and God-dishonoring system of slavery, and to secure to the colored po-

pulation of the United States, all the rights and privileges which belong to them as men and as Americans."

The following are from the resolutions of the Oneida (N.Y.) Congregational Association :

"*Resolved*, That American slavery, *in all its relations and influences*, is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, and therefore A SIN of the *most flagitious character*."

"*Resolved*, That it is the duty of ministers of the Gospel to give this sin a prominent place in that catalogue of *crimes* which they are laboring to destroy."

Resolution of the Berkshire (Mass.) Congregational Association, June, 1837.

"*Resolved*, That the existence of American slavery is opposed to the natural rights of man, to the law of God, and to the spirit of the Gospel; and therefore is a sin which ought to unite the efforts of all Christians for its speedy extermination."

Several Conferences of the Protestant Methodist Church, have borne faithful testimony against slaveholding, as also the Erie Conference of the Methodist Society. The Primitive Methodist Conference, assembled in New York, September 7, 1837,

"*Resolved*, That no person shall be a minister or member of our Society, that holds, buys, or sells human beings as goods or chattels, or countenances the same."

The Society of Friends have lately given the following testimony :—

"*Slavery*.—Although, as a religious society we have cleared our hands of holding our fellow-men in bondage, yet as Christians, and members of a community in which slavery exists to an enormous extent, we cannot divest ourselves of a tender feeling towards the subjects of this system of oppression, and affecting degradation. The hardships which this poor people undergo, in having their just right to liberty and property violently withheld—abused as they are, and evilly treated in various ways; and moreover being subjected to have the tenderest ties rent asunder by the internal slave-trade, which is carried on to the disgrace of a Christian-professing people, are crying evils, and if not arrested, must, unquestionably involve our country in serious difficulties and distress.

As advocates of universal righteousness and justice, we should not only entertain a lively sympathy and commiseration towards them and their masters, but embrace every opportunity for exposing the iniquity of the traffic, and of their unjust bondage, and for rightly preparing the way for their emancipation. Much remains to be done, before this foul disgrace is removed from our land. Discouragements may present at every step, but we humbly trust that the cause of the oppressed is regarded by a merciful and just God; and as its advocates continue to labor with zeal and perseverance in the spirit of the gospel, we entertain no doubt that their labors will be blessed."

And the New York Yearly Meeting of Friends, in their address to the Citizens of the United States, in 1837, on this subject, say—

"Among the evils of slavery, may be reckoned the deleterious influence it exercises over the morals both of the master and the slave. We entreat you,

fellow-citizens, to consider whether the Christian religion in its purity, can flourish among a people, who, without compunction, claim and exercise exclusive control over the persons of their fellow men, require the performance of arduous daily tasks, and appropriate the fruits of labor thus extorted, to their own benefit, regardless of the Scripture declaration, that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and of the injunction of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Can those who are content to keep their slaves in ignorance of the sacred writings, fully estimate their value, or appreciate the importance of the doctrines contained in the New Testament? It is contrary to the very nature of things, that they should entertain a high regard for the Gospel of Christ, while in the maintenance of slavery, they violate its spirit. If the religion of a slave-holding community is thus seriously affected by this enormous evil, how can it be expected that the morality of that community should be preserved unimpaired? How can it be supposed that the domestic relations of the slaves will be respected by the masters, or by the slaves themselves, who, from their want of mental improvement, cannot properly estimate the sanctity of the marriage covenant, or be aware of the restraint it is designed to impose. By destroying the moral principle of the bondman, slavery urges him to intemperance, theft, and other vices; and to such a state of debasement does it reduce him, that he can hardly be reclaimed by the force of example, or by persuasion. He becomes addicted to licentiousness in all its forms, and being destined by his hard lot, to live and toil for the ease and luxury of others, and accustomed to be governed and controlled with much severity, he regards it as his highest enjoyment, to escape the allotted task, and to surrender himself a prey to the leading of his unbridled passions.

"We might proceed to enumerate many prominent evils resulting from Slavery, and refer, as one pernicious consequence, to the habits of indolence it engenders, among those who depend on the labor of slaves, the baneful effects of which are obvious to all who have the opportunity of contrasting the Northern and the Southern States; but we base our abhorrence of Slavery, chiefly on its SINFULNESS, standing as it does, opposed to the divine principles of the Christian religion. We have tried this system by the gospel of our holy Redeemer, and we have found that it harmonizes with none of its precepts; but that it conflicts with the teachings of Him who came into the world emphatically the friend of the poor and the oppressed."

We cannot withhold the following excellent extract, from the Minutes of the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Eighteenth Session; met in the city of Pittsburgh, October, 1836.

"Your committee on the papers from Vermont and Ohio, have taken into consideration the subjects referred to in them, and convinced that it is the duty of the church to exhibit her testimony in the clearest light against the sin of slavery; and to avoid giving occasion to the charge of having any connection with those who countenance the cause of oppression, would therefore recommend for your adoption the following preamble and resolutions:

"Whereas this court did, at its sessions in 1828, pass certain resolutions

approving the plans of the American colonization society, and recommending it to the members of this church, for their conscientious support, at the same time distinctly specifying, that the emancipation of slaves, as maintained by the testimony and practice of this church, be accompanied in all cases, not contrary to the will of the emancipated, with removal from the United States, to such place or places as the emancipated shall choose. And whereas the American Colonization Society, in the practical development of its plans, has manifested a total disregard of those principles on which it received the approbation of this court. This court never did give its approbation to the Colonization Society considered as opposed to manumission ; on the contrary, it was on the supposition that it would be favorable to abolition that we gave it our countenance. We have always considered slavery to be an atrocious sin, an outrageous robbery of man from himself and from his Maker ; as much more wicked than common robbery as liberty is more valuable than property ; surely continuance in iniquity, cannot make iniquity become justice ; no legal investiture can make *wrong* to be *right* ; neither can the sin of slavery justify the sin of banishing the sufferers ; nor can we conceive of any thing more injudicious than to transport the heathen of our land to evangelize them on the African shore. Therefore,

“ *Resolved*, 1. That as this synod has always borne explicit testimony against the heaven-daring sin of slavery, and lifted their warning voice against its awfully dangerous consequences, so they continue to do.

“ 2. This synod continues to maintain the duty and safety of the immediate and universal emancipation of the enslaved, and they view with satisfaction and interest the augmentation of numbers and the increase of zeal among the friends of the abolition of slavery in our land.

“ 3. That the Colonization Society, in making expatriation a condition of emancipation, in fostering and not suppressing prejudice against the colored man, in extorting the consent of the enslaved to banishment as if ‘ by a *cart whip*,’ does not merit, but has forfeited the patronage of the Christian community, and cannot have the approbation of the Reformed Presbyterian church.

“ 4. That however pure may be the motives of colonizationists and benevolent in their operations, for the good of the colored man, an insuperable objection lies against the system, viz. that he never desired their aid in this way ; the colored population of this country always shuddered at the idea of transportation to Africa, where the language of the people is to them barbarous, and the clime insalubrious ; they have the innate attachment of mankind to the place of their nativity and the peculiar horror at removal which is necessarily attached to those who have never read nor traveled ; besides, it is plain that some of them viewed from the first the plan of colonization with a suspicious eye, as designed to weaken the nature and remove the mind and muscles of free blacks, so that they could in no way minister to the removal of the heavy yoke that galled the shoulders of their brethren. In fine they viewed, and still view the transportation ship with horror, inferior only to the slave-market, and the African shore with dread reluctance, only inferior to the rice plantations in Arkansas or Texas.

"5. That it is the duty of the Christian church, to open her mouth for the dumb, oppressed slave, and to plead the cause of those who are by the cupidity of men under the sanction of iniquitous laws appointed to destruction, to remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them, and to employ all the talents given to her members and ministers in the cause of liberty, that the oppressed may be set free, and every yoke of iniquity be broken.

"6. That it is the duty of the Christian community to stand up for the principles of truth, and the cause of righteousness in the face of all the violence which ungodly men exercise and threaten. If the advocates of abolition be beaten from the area of their contest, these men of blood will in all probability, attack the Reformed Presbyterian church, which has in fact always been an abolition society. Indeed, the church long before the reformation, emancipated slaves in Europe, for we find the acts of manumission were generally in this form. '*Pro timore Dei et pro amore Christi*,' for the fear of God and the love of Christ, we emancipate. Shall the Reformed Presbyterian church be less explicit now, in this advanced period of her testimony, and in republican America, where the humane and the righteous of other denominations are stepping out like martyrs to suffer reproach, and are taking willingly the spoiling of their goods, and even exposing their lives on the high places of this glorious advocacy.

"7. That, in compliance with the memorial of the petitioners of Adams county, in accordance with the principles of our church, and the sentiments of our own hearts, we withdraw the approbation given to the Colonization Society, and transfer our approbation and patronage to the cause of abolition.

"8. That it is the duty of covenanters not only to encourage the operations of the benevolent, for the relief of the oppressed, but also to avail themselves of the opening which these afforded for disseminating the principles of our church, especially for vindicating the paramount authority of the divine law in regard to social relations and actions.

"In regard to this too, we ought to be thankful and take courage that this sentiment becomes more and more prevalent among abolitionists. In one of the addresses published by the Ohio A. S. S. on the duty of the churches, this sentiment is set forth :—'It is in vain to say that slavery is a political evil, that ministers should not interfere with politics. Will such an excuse avail at the bar of God when the judgment shall sit? The gospel ministry are sent to be the light of the world. The Savior says they are the light of the world. Who but the ministers of Christ are to enlighten civil government? *The Sacred Scriptures are the standard morals for government as well as for individuals.* Should not the covenanters who have labored so long and suffered so much for this principle, rejoice that men of talent, moral worth and influence are helping us to propagate that great truth which is the seed-bud of all our peculiarities as a professing people, and which must be laid at the foundation of the millennial temple.'"

We add hereunto the following interesting letter from the venerable Rev. John Black of Pittsburgh.

" *Pittsburgh, March 28th, 1839.*

" DEAR SIR,

" I have received your respectful letter of March 18th, requesting from me a 'statement of the anti-slavery action of the Covenanters.' In agreeableness with this request, I with pleasure herewith transmit you a brief statement of the action of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in relation to slavery. Nearly forty years ago, the highest judicatory of this church resolved to purge their communion of this dreadful evil. They enacted, that no slaveholder should be retained in the fellowship of the church. A committee was appointed to visit the Southern States, and regulate the concerns of the church in that part of America. This Committee faithfully performed the duty assigned them, and accomplished the object of their mission. They settled the affairs of the Church, and abolished the practice of holding slaves among church members. Those who held slaves cheerfully emancipated them, preferring the communion of the Church to the wages of iniquity.

" " This produced an additional evidence of the force of Christian principle. It triumphed over self-interest. In many parts of the United States, men sacrificed on the altar of religion the property which the *civil law* gave them in their fellow men.' There is not now, nor has there been since, a slaveholder in the communion of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

" Slavery has all along been testified against, from the pulpit and the press. Its opposition to the principles of moral justice—to the decalogue, and to the spirit and genius of the gospel of Christ, has, at all times, been explicitly maintained. On sacramental occasions, slaveholders have uniformly been debarred from the Lord's table, and classed, where the apostle places them, among 'murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers,' and the most vile and atrocious characters.

" In 1828, certain resolutions approving, and recommending the constitution and plans of the Colonization society were presented, and passed in the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. It was not doubted for a moment, but that this Society would have a favorable operation on the interest of the colored man. Whatever views the slaveholders might have entertained about this society, all the members of the Synod, acted from the purest, and most benevolent motives, entertaining as they did, the greatest sympathy for the poor, oppressed, and down trodden slaves, and the greatest hostility to the system of slavery. It was hoped that this society would, ultimately, accomplish the emancipation of the negroes. All looked upon it with a favorable eye, professing as it did the only plausible remedy for slavery. And with this view of the subject, it was unanimously approved. And indeed some of the members still believe that the colonization society is calculated to be a blessing to the African race. Others, however, now entertain a different opinion of its beneficial effects, and are afraid that it will rather retard than accelerate the abolition of slavery—that, perhaps, it is viewed as a security to the slaveholder, in the peaceable possession of his slave property, by removing the eyesore of free colored men out of their sight—and likewise, that it is become a salvo to the consciences of slave-holding church members, that it

will answer every purpose of abolition, and is the best and safest plan of getting rid of the negro population, while in the meantime, the slaves are still in bonds. For such reasons as these, some of the members of Synod think differently now of the Colonization Society from what they once did.

"Thus, Sir, I have endeavored to comply with your request, as briefly and as correctly as I could.

With much respect,

Yours in the cause of truth and liberty,

JOHN BLACK.

G. RATTRIE PARBURY, Cor. Sec. of the }
New York E. U. A. S. Society. }

And now, Christian brethren of all dominations, is it not our duty, in view of the premises, to put forth immediate and efficient effort to purify the church of Christ our Lord, from the grievous sin of slaveholding? To labor forthwith for the entire abolition of slavery? To restore the two and a half millions of our countrymen now groaning under an oppression which crushes them into legal chattelship, to the rights of humanity? We would, then, most affectionately and earnestly ask you to co-operate with us for the advancement of principles so important both to the temporal and eternal interests of men. These principles must be realized in our measures. They have been again and again asserted. They must now be embodied in our lives. A mere assent to them may operate as a salvo to the conscience, even of a slaveholder. Recent developments have shown that even traders in the persons of men can assert them, and defend them, when their own supposed rights are invaded, and assent to them most fully, while they violate them most flagrantly, if assent to them is all that is required. The time has come, therefore, when they must have more than a place in church records, they must have conformity of action, every where, by all who assent to them.

If, Christian brethren, slaveholding is sin, slaveholders must be sinners. But how have you treated them? Have you labored with sleepless anxiety for their conversion? Have you mourned and prayed over this sin as you have seen it rapidly increasing and widely spreading? Have you dealt with this sin in the church as you have dealt with other sins? Or have you given countenance and encouragement to the sin of slaveholding, by treating those guilty of it, with the confidence due to the holiest men, inviting them to your pulpits to preach the gospel of Jesus, while you knew they were making merchandize of the souls of men, and trading in temples of the Holy Ghost? Have you not admitted those infatuated sinners to the table of that Savior who died equally for the black man as for the white man, yea, welcomed them, without expressing a doubt of their perfect fitness, while you would drive away therefrom the poor man who had stolen a single dollar to procure bread for his starving babes? Have we not all, too long, by our conduct towards slaveholders assured them we do not believe the principles we profess? Come, then, let us repent before the Lord, and by his grace resolve to make our future conduct and efforts a living comment of our excellent principles. And if any other mode seems better to you to accomplish this good work than ours, then

adopt it—but, for God's sake, for humanity's sake do something, and do it now. Now is the appointed time—now is the day of salvation!

We are not unaware that objections are entertained against associated effort to put down slaveholding. And not among the least it is urged, the church itself is an association against all sin; and, therefore, a voluntary association, having for its object the suppression of a particular sin, is an interference with the rightful jurisdiction of the church. But we would not come in collision with that authority—we would ever bow to it. We admit the jurisdiction of the church over the sin of slaveholding—but not its exclusive jurisdiction. Church members, by being such, surely do not yield the right and sacrifice the duty, to form other associations to do good, or to resist evil. And when the church fails to rebuke wickedness in high places, and tolerates glaring sin, is it not the imperious duty of those church members who see it, however small the number, to adopt such efficient modes of action as are most likely to make their influence felt for the correction of the evil? Should they not give to their principles all the strength of associated action?

But there is, while the apathy of the church on the sin of slaveholding continues, another and most cogent reason for combined effort. Slaveholders are a combined body, associated and bound together by the strong bond of identity of interest. On every question, touching the institution of slavery, they present a solid phalanx. They act in a body animated by a single spirit. All other interests are merged in that of slavery. Hence in ecclesiastical, as in political matters, the South has always controlled the nation. Hence slavery has made the moral power of the church do homage at its polluted shrine. No affinity created by the Christian religion, seems to possess the strength of that bond which binds together the professed disciples of Jesus, and the bold blasphemer in support of this vile institution. Here the professed Christian stands side by side, in brotherhood and affection with the infidel slaveholder, while he rudely thrusts from him the Christian abolitionist. How hopeless then is any action against this organized and increasing interest, unless that opposition be united and organized. And if a minority united in a bad cause, and against liberty in a land where liberty is the boast and the watch word, may become so potent—what might not be accomplished by a union among Christians of high moral feelings, even if their numbers be small, in favor of liberty and of Christian principle? Let the friends of the slave in each and every church, if they are but six in number, form themselves into a church Anti-Slavery Society, to purify their own particular church of the spirit of slaveholding. And where it may be convenient, let such societies become auxiliary to some central Society organized for that purpose. Such a society exists in Philadelphia—and our own Society, the Evangelical Union Anti-Slavery Society of New York, is designed as the central Society for Anti-Slavery Church action in this city. We are anxious that each church in this city, of whatever denomination, may early have its representative in and auxiliary to our Union. And churches in the country too, should not be behind in this matter. If ever slaveholders and slaveholding ministers are placed, in the estimation of all good people, where the Rev. and venerable John Black says the

Apostle places them, among murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers, adulterers," &c. it must be done by the purification of the individual churches from the spirit of slavery. And this can never be done while such men are admitted to our communion tables and to our pulpits. And they will be so admitted till the friends of the slave in the churches take efficient measures to prevent it. Let all the churches in this city take a decided and elevated stand against the sin of slaveholding, and the salutary influence thereof will be felt and acknowledged throughout the entire Republic. To this city, slaveholders of every grade and from every part of the Union resort for business or for pleasure,—they have equal access to our social circles, our family altars, our communion tables and our pulpits with men of pure hearts and benevolent feelings—and hundreds of our merchants are so connected with them in business as to be virtually slaveholders themselves—while the most of our ministers do them greater honor than they do the tried and faithful of the Lord. Much, then, is to be done for the purification of Zion here from the sin of slavery. Much influence will be opposed to our efforts. The contest which prevails against the combined influence of Ministers and Merchants in New York city must be vigorous, energetic and persevering. The cause must be intrinsically good. The weapons of warfare, not carnal, but spiritual. Such is our cause—our weapons, and such let our contest be, and we shall prevail, for HE that is for us, is more than all that are against us.

Christian brethren, we beg you to consider these things. They touch vitally our consistency as Christians. We have no right to be neutral. "Thou shalt not suffer sin upon thy neighbor, but shalt in anywise rebuke it." We must not make the church the asylum of sin. Slaveholding should have no place there. Slaveholding must cease, either by violence, or the voluntary action of the masters. There will be none of it in the millenium. But while the Northern church tolerates it, and the Southern church sustains and defends it, how can it be abolished? Men love too well to be called master, power is too sweet, habit too strong to be overcome, while the church of Jesus Christ in all parts of our land, keeps the conscience at ease on this subject, by practically saying there is no guilt in slaveholding.—So long as the church does this, it is not to be expected that worldly men will be more just, or act from purer principles of morality. And while the church in the free States takes no vigorous measures for its removal, nothing can be expected from professed Christians in the slave states. The church is this day responsible for the existence of slavery in the United States. Had even the Northern church come up to its duty, when this nation came into political being, it would have carried the whole church, and eventually the whole nation along with it. But with the exception of a few empty resolutions, what has she done? Nothing towards breaking every yoke, and letting the oppressed go free.

Let us not suppose, Christian brethren, that this sin in the Church is of but small magnitude, and therefore but few and small efforts need be made for its removal. More than half the members of Churches in the South are actually guilty of the sin of slaveholding. They not only hold men as slaves, but buy and sell men, women and children, and if one of them escapes from his bond-

age, they unblushingly advertise and offer rewards for the arrest of the weary fugitive. Hear a minister of the South, James Smylie, A. M. of Mississippi, in a pamphlet in favor of slavery. "If slavery be a sin, and if advertising and apprehending slaves with a view to restore them to their masters, is a direct violation of the divine law, and if the *buying, selling, or holding a slave* FOR THE SAKE OF GAIN, is a heinous sin and scandalous, THEN VERILY THREE-FOURTHS OF ALL THE EPISCOPALIANS, METHODISTS, BAPTISTS AND PRESBYTERIANS IN ELEVEN STATES OF THE UNION, are of the Devil. They hold, if they do not buy and sell slaves: and *with few exceptions*, they hesitate not to apprehend and restore runaway slaves when in their power." "And if slavery be a sin," says the Rev. R. J. Breckinridge of Baltimore, "it is certainly a sin of no common magnitude. The cry that it is wholly a political affair, and that the Church steps out of her sphere in meddling with it, is worse than idle. Its political aspect, we grant, is bad enough, and fairly belies our high sounding professions of republicanism; but its evils, in a moral point of view, may truly be termed LEGION. The Church has cherished it in her bosom, and sustained it by her example, until it has reared its head so high in the sanctuary as almost to bid defiance to her authority. This is evidently one of the worst signs of the times. But if we must wait for civil authorities to take the lead in opposing this sin, what is it but an acknowledgment that politics are purer than religion. We are truly in a woful plight, if the Church must abandon her contest with sin, and lean upon the arm of the world. Perhaps nothing tends so much to perpetuate this monstrous system, than the acknowledged fact, that men, truly pious," (or supposed so to be) "support it by their example. This hallows it in the eyes of the world. Would the Church only see to the removing of such props, the unsightly fabric must soon totter and fall. But if reformation commence not at the house of God, assuredly judgment will begin there, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Immediate emancipation was once dreaded as an evil, alike ruinous to master and slave. But that fear, in the wise dispensations of Providence, has been removed. A flood of light has been poured upon this point. It is now conceded that if slavery is to cease, it can not be by gradualism or colonizationism, but must be by immediate emancipation. The issue is now made up between the principles of immediate abolition and of perpetual slavery. Nor will the trial cease till there is a final decision. Nor can we doubt on which side the ultimate verdict will be given—for "God will overturn, overturn, overturn, till he whose right it is to rule, shall come!"

Will you, Christian brethren, come up to the help of the Lord, in bringing about this great moral revolution? What part will you take in this glorious work? Will not kindness for the deluded slaveholder, induce you to do something to save them from present guilt, and save them and their land from the desolations which God will bring upon them, if all moral means fail for their reformation? Do your hearts feel no sorrow when you contemplate what must be the fate of a people, abandoned of heaven to continue in such high handed oppression? Come, then, and help us. We cannot mourn over too great zeal in this cause of purity and liberty—on the contrary we have reason

to confess how very far short our zeal has come of that which the greatness of this sin, the cruelty of the oppression, and the number of the oppressed, have demanded of us. Come, and warm our zeal, and counsel our understandings, and strengthen our hearts in this great cause of humanity and of God. Come, and pray and labor with us for the slaves of our land. Come, and help us to purify the church of our God. Come, and help us to save this nation from infamy and from blood. Come, and share in the labors and the glorious rewards of restoring two and a half millions of human beings to the rights of humanity—and then will the Lord return to Jerusalem with mercies—will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her !

In Behalf of the Society,

LEWIS TAPPAN,	} Committee.
E. W. CHESTER,	
H. BARNEY,	
G. RATTRIE PARBURY,	

CONSTITUTION.

WHEREAS one-sixth part of the people of this country are held in slavery,—considered as chattels personal,—bought and sold as beasts of burden,—denied, by law and custom, the privilege of reading the Holy Scriptures,—compelled to break the commandments, and endure outrages at which humanity weeps, many of them being members of the Church of Christ;—and whereas slavery is a sin, and utterly inconsistent with the law of God, and totally irreconcilable with the Spirit of the Gospel;—and whereas God hath said, open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction; open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy—cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins,—we do hereby associate ourselves together to promote the immediate and entire abolition of slavery, to abolish the unchristian prejudice against color, and to deliver the Churches from their defilements, and agree to be governed by the following

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

This Society shall be called the **EVANGELICAL UNION ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY** of the CITY of NEW YORK, and shall be auxiliary to the American Anti-Slavery Society.

ARTICLE. II.

The object of this Society shall be to aid in promoting the abolition of slavery in the United States, and especially to purify the Church at the North, as well as at the South, from its pollution, by appeals to the hearts and consciences of men, by warning, entreaty and earnest prayer, and the application of the Bible doctrine of **IMMEDIATE REPENTANCE** to the sin of slavery.

ARTICLE. III.

This Society shall aim to elevate the character and condition of the people of color by encouraging their intellectual, moral and religious improvement, and by removing public prejudice against them, that thus they may, according to their intellectual and moral worth, share an equality with their countrymen in every right and privilege, as men and Christians.

ARTICLE IV.

Any member of an Evangelical Church, residing in the city of New York, who consents to the principles of this constitution, who contributes to the funds of this Society, and is not a slaveholder, may be a member of this Society, and shall be entitled to vote at its meetings.

ARTICLE V.

The officers of this Society shall be a President, four Vice Presidents, a Corresponding Secretary, a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer, who, with one member from each Church represented in this Society, shall constitute a Board of Managers. They shall be annually elected by the members of the Society, and seven of them shall form a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE VI.

The Board of Managers shall annually elect an Executive Committee, to consist of not less than five nor more than twelve members, who shall have power to enact their own by-laws, fill any vacancy in their body and in the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, direct the Treasurer in the application of all monies, and call special meetings of the Society. They shall make arrangements for all meetings of the Society, make an annual written report of their doings, the income, expenditures, and funds of the Society, and shall hold stated meetings, and adopt the most energetic measures in their power to advance the objects of the Society.

ARTICLE VII.

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Society, or in his absence one of the Vice Presidents, or in their absence a President pro. tem.

The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Society.

The Recording Secretary shall notify all meetings of the Society and of the Executive Committees, and shall keep records of the same in separate books.

The Treasurer shall collect the subscriptions, make payment at the direction of the Executive Committee, and present a written and audited account to accompany the Annual Report.

ARTICLE VIII.

The Annual meeting of the Society shall be held each year, at such time and place as the Executive Committee may direct; when the accounts of the Treasurer shall be presented, the Annual Report read, appropriate speeches delivered, the officers chosen, and such other business transacted as shall be deemed expedient,—and quarterly and other meetings of the society may be held, at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX.

All meetings of this Society, of its Board of Managers, and of the Executive Committee shall be opened with prayer.

ARTICLE X.

This Society shall use its influence to have the monthly concert of Prayer for the enslaved and for free people of color, (held on the last Monday of each month) observed by all its members.

ARTICLE XI.

Any Society in the city of New York, founded upon the same principles as this Society, may become auxiliary thereto.

ARTICLE XII.

This Constitution may be amended in any way not affecting its foundation principles at any meeting of the Society, by a vote of two thirds of the members present, provided the amendments proposed have been submitted in writing to the Executive Committee, one week, at least, previous to the meeting.

The E. U. A. S. Society of the city of New York was organized at Broadway Hall, Jan. 11th, 1839. Its officers are

PRESIDENT.

HON. JAMES. G. BIRNEY.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

E. W. CHESTER, Esq.
REV. J. T. RAYMOND,

REV. GEORGE STORRS,
REV. E. A. FRAZER.

COR. SECRETARY,

G. RATRIE PARBURT.

RECORDING SECRETARY,

A. O. WILCOX.

TREASURER,

WILLIAM JOHNSTON.

BOARD OF MANAGERS.

HON. JAMES G. BIRNEY.
 REV. J. T. RAYMOND.
 REV. E. A. FRAZER.
 A. O. WILCOX.

E. W. CHESTER, Esq.
 REV. GEORGE STORRS.
 G. RATRIE PARBURT.
 WILLIAM JOHNSTON.

ANTHONY LANE, . . .	Spring Street Church.
GEORGE M. TRACY, . . .	4th Free Pres. Church.
T. O. BUCKMASTER, . . .	Green St. Methodist Church.
J. B. WHEEDON, . . .	Central Pres. Church.
Rev. DUNCAN DUNBAR, . . .	Baptist Church.
E. A. M'LEAN, . . .	Duane St. Met. Church.
LEWIS TAPPAN, . . .	Broadway Tabernacle.
D. H. SAND, . . .	Forsyth St. Met. Church.
JOHN W. HILL, . . .	Seventh Pres. Church.
OBED WICKENS, . . .	Vestry St. Met. Church.
ROBERT AIKMAN, . . .	Associate Reformed Church.
L. R. OSBORN, . . .	Allen St. Met. Church.
S. GILBERT, . . .	3d Free Pres. Church.
Rev. Z. GRINNELL, . . .	Chatham Street Chapel.
Rev. T. S. WRIGHT, . . .	Frankfort St. Church.
Rev. S. E. CORNISH,	
WILLIAM THOMPSON, . . .	Spring St. Bapt. Church.
STEPHEN ANGELL, . . .	Sixth Avenue Church.
TIMOTHY EATO, . . .	Zion Congregation,
—— CORNISH, . . .	Bethel Church.
THOMAS WILDES, . . .	Second St. Met. Church.
J. SIMMONS, . . .	Asbury Met. Church.
—— DOUGHTY, . . .	John St. Met. Church.

